METRO / A23

Mother Lily says Lapid 'miscast' as Makati mayor, supports Binay

WORLD /A25

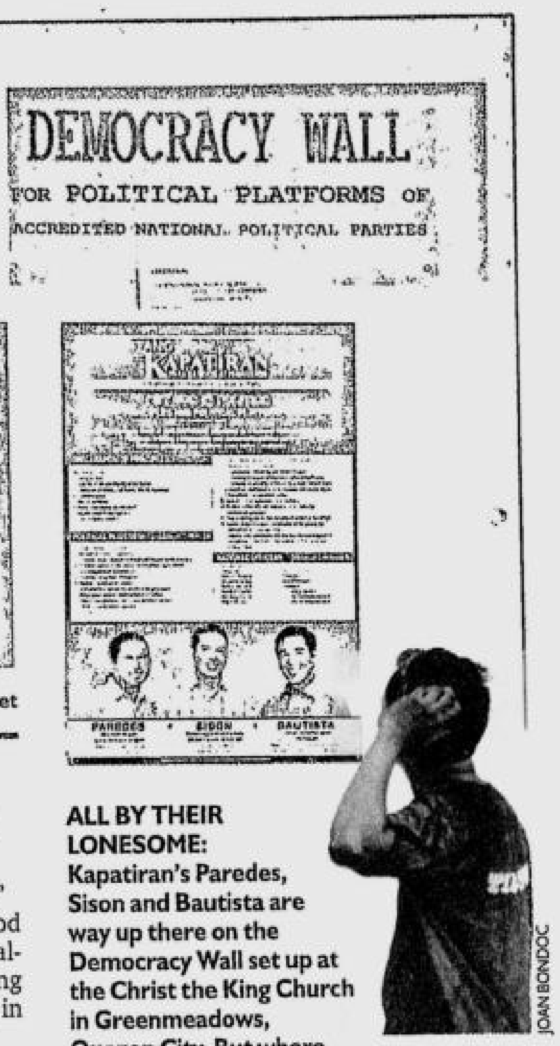
British media slams 'Dumb Dubya' over royal blooper

NEWS / A2

Slugfest for No. 1: Loren says Villar 'ST' not as important as honesty

MOTORING / B2-1

14 lessons from driving Toyota's Prius


DEMOCRACY WALL
FOR POLITICAL PLATFORMS OF ACCREDITED NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES
KAPATIRAN
PAREDES
SISON
BAUTISTA

ALL BY THEIR LONESOME: Kapatiran's Paredes, Sison and Bautista are way up there on the Democracy Wall set up at the Christ the King Church in Greenmeadows, Quezon City. But where are the other accredited political parties' platforms? That is, if they have any. JOAN BONDOC

5 dead, 35 wounded in Tacurong bombing

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A POWERFUL EXplosion ripped through a crowded tricycle terminal near a market in Tacurong City in Sultan Kudarat at 4:50 p.m. yesterday, leaving at least five people dead and 35 wounded, police reported.

Insp. Benjamin de los Santos, deputy police chief of Tacurong, said the blast occurred at the corner of Bonifacio and Magsaysay streets

5 DEAD/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, May 9, 2007 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 150 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Terms of endearment mark GO's final push

By Fe Zamora

ELEKSYON 2007

AN "ENDEARING" CANDIDATE, AN EFfective endorser and a smart campaign plan based on hard data and implemented by determined campaigners—all these are coming into play as Genuine Opposition (GO) candidates make their final push before D-Day.

"Endearment," according to GO campaign manager Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, is how a voter feels after "knowing" the candidate personally, seeing him on television or hearing him on the radio.

A voter who finds the candidate "endearing" will express this positive feeling on the ballot—or what is known as "conversion."

Since the start of the campaign period in February, GO candidates—individually or in groups—have been introducing themselves to voters on the streets, in markets, in schools.

They've been stumping across the

TERMS/ A8

Army tied to abduction

Plates on AUV used to seize Burgos traced to 56th IB

By TJ Burgonio

THE LICENSE PLATES ON the maroon Asian utility vehicle (AUV) used in the April 28 abduction of Jonas Joseph Burgos, son of the late newspaper publisher and press freedom icon Jose "Joe" Burgos Jr., have been traced to an impounded vehicle parked at an Army camp in Bulacan since June last year.

The Burgos family suspects the military was involved in the kidnapping, but officials of the Armed Forces of the Philippines have denied the accusations.

Regidor de Leon, executive director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Central Luzon, said yesterday that a locally assembled jeep with Plate No. TAB 194 had been seized by a team from the DENR and the Philippine Army.

The vehicle was believed to have been used to haul illegally cut logs in Norzagaray and Angat. Its owner, Mauro Mudlong, was subsequently charged with il-

ARMY/ A20

SEEING STARS: Sen. Kiko Pangilinan with wife, actress Sharon Cuneta, and daughters Frankie (right) and Miel take to the stage at the Batac Imelda Cultural Center to the delight of the audience of more than 8,000. Billed as a family-run campaign, the celebrity couple toured northern Luzon by bus last week with Pangilinan's brother-in-law Gary Valenciano. EDWIN BACASMAS

Palace execs, Mike A's sis, other VIPs in party-list groups

By TJ Burgonio, Nikko Dizon and Fe Zamora

A MILITANT PARTY-LIST GROUP IS questioning the credentials of the children of an administration senator and a Cabinet secretary, among many others, who are being fielded by some party-list groups as their nominees to the House of Representatives.

Citing the published list of groups, their nominees and other information, Sanlakas national president Wilson Fortaleza identified some of the relatives of government officials as follows:

- Narciso Santiago III, son of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago. He is the No. 1 nominee of the Alliance of Rural Concerns (ARC), which represents the marginalized sector of agrarian reform beneficiaries.
- Hussein P. Pangandaman, son of Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman. He is the first nominee of Novelty Entrepreneurship Livelihood for Food Inc.

PALACE EXECS/ A21

Ex-AFP brass bare 'Oplan Mercury Rising'

By Norman Bordadora and Tony S. Bergonia

A NEW POLL WATCHDOG COALITION composed of retired military brass, officers and enlisted men yesterday disclosed an alleged fresh plot to cheat in the May 14 elections, with the purported objective of ensuring an overall good showing by the administration's senatorial candidates.

Quoting a purported intelligence report on "Oplan Mercury Rising," the coalition that calls itself Bantay Boto said top election officers in four regions in the Visayas and Mindanao and in 12 provinces across the country had specifically been ordered to make sure that three Team Unity (TU) candidates would bag the top three slots in these areas.

Retired Commodore Ismael Aparri, one of the conveners of Bantay Boto, named the candidates as Michael Defensor, Jose Miguel Zubiri and Prospero Pichay.

Its other conveners are retired Gen. Romeo Dominguez, chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Northern Luzon Command under the Arroyo administration; retired Philippine National Police Director General Recaredo Sarmiento, PNP chief under the Ramos administration, and retired Navy Capt. Salvador Paron, a leader of Forces.

Among the areas supposedly pinpointed for fraud operations is Eastern Samar, the province of Gov. Ben Evardone, the TU media director, Aparri said at a news conference.

EX-AFP/ A21

Poll watchdogs learn from Garci: Focus on canvass

By Volt Contreras

IT'S THE CANVASSING, STUPID.

That's the lesson of "Hello Garci," according to independent poll watchers mobilizing to guard against fraud in the May 14 elections.

In the past, watchers tended to focus more on the conduct of elections—on the counting at the precinct level and on the integrity of the election returns (ERs), said Carlos Medina, one of the

POLL/ A9

Binay focuses counterattack on Ombudsman

By Volt Contreras and Michelle V. Remo

STILL GLOATING OVER MALACAÑANG'S aborted effort to unseat him, reelectionist Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay yesterday directed his counterattack at the Office of the Ombudsman, the agency that ordered him suspended last week based on a 5-month-old complaint about which he was not formally informed.

In the first public hearing on his case, Binay wondered why the Ombudsman had sought his "preventive suspension" based on a complaint lodged by one of his local political foes in December 2006—without first giving him a copy of

BINAY/ A20

PUNTA LANG SA OFFICE... PERO WALANG GAGAWIN!

Mike A gets doctors' OK to go back to work

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

NOW, HE WILL NO LONGER HAVE A REASON to be depressed.

Yesterday, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo finally got a clearance from his doctors to resume work in his Makati office after passing his first medical checkup following critical open

MIKE A GETS/ A8

Top AFP officers telling soldiers to back TU, Palparan party-list

COTABATO CITY—RANKING military officials in Mindanao are said to be visiting soldiers in various camps, telling them to vote for the administration's Team Unity (TU) slate as well as party-list groups identified with the government, including that of retired Gen. Jovito Palparan.

Among these officials is Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, according to a military source who declined to be named for security reasons. "They have been visiting camps on their own initiative, to advise soldiers to vote for TU and party-list groups allied with the government. This is a separate effort that is not directed by the higher command," he said.

Originally, the campaign was only intended to deny victory to left-leaning party-list groups, said the source, who holds a vital position in the military based in Mindanao.

"But as Election Day nears, and probably because some soldiers kept on asking whom to vote for among the senatorial candidates, TU was endorsed," he said.

During the local absentee voting last week in Mati, Davao Oriental, soldiers told the INQUIRER they had been instructed to vote for TU candidates and party-list groups supportive of the Arroyo administration.

They said that among the party-list groups endorsed to them were Anad and Uni-Mad.

But Army spokesperson Maj. Ernesto Torres told the INQUIRER that the military was not campaigning for TU.

"There is no such effort. What we are doing is embarking on educating our soldiers that we should value our votes, that the

TOP AFP/ A8

EZ2
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Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
9 0 2 | 8 6 0
(All in exact order)
6/42 LUZON/VIS-MIN
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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY LAW DE GUZMAN, INQUIRER RESEARCH/05/08/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

Manny-Loren slugfest for No. 1

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

VILLAR

LEGARDA

THE BATTLE FOR FIRST place in the senatorial race has become so heated that the most avid rivals—Genuine Opposition candidates Loren Legarda and Senate President Manuel Villar—are openly trading barbs and possibly even spreading black propaganda against each other.

In the "Isang Tanong" forum of the GMA television network last Sunday, Legarda said honesty, more than "*sipag* and *tiyaga*" (hard work and perseverance)—which is the campaign slogan of Villar—was more important in choosing leaders.

At the Kapihan sa Senado yesterday, Villar shot back: "Honesty to me is a given, you don't have to mention it. One should be honest if you are in public service. If you have to prove your honesty, you should not be a public official in the first place."

Legarda, who lost a bitterly fought vice-presidential race in 2004, has openly declared her desire to be the top vote-getter in this year's election exercise, with the slogan "Loren Legarda: Number One Sa Senado."

And even though several surveys have shown him to have a lock on one of the top three slots, Villar is juicing up his campaign to ensure he finishes first.

Wanting to be best

"Being No. 1 is not important. But in everything you do, you always want to be the best. If you play tennis, you want to win the gold medal; if you play golf, you want to be a champion; if you take an examination, you want to be top; and if you run for senator, I also want to be top," said Villar.

But he claimed not to be obsessed with being No. 1. Being in the Magic 12 would be enough, he said.

Villar said the fierce rivalry for the top vote-getter in this year's elections may have something to do with the 2010 presidential elections.

Junking time

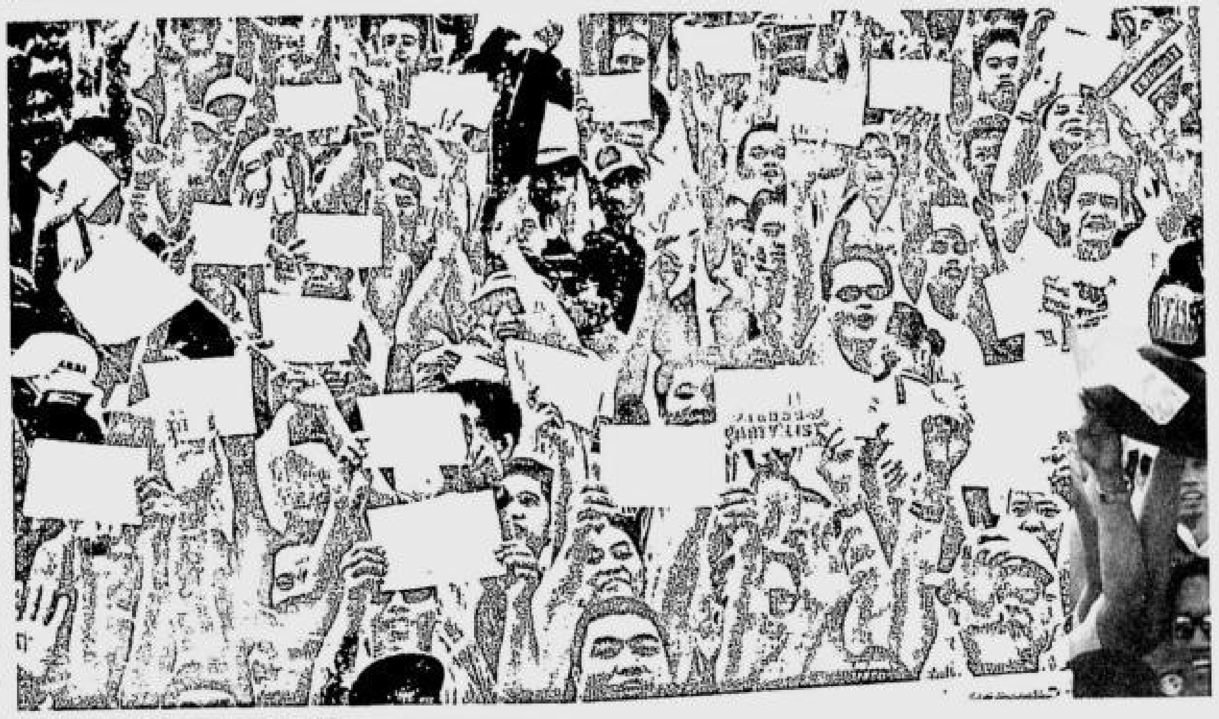
Meanwhile, it's now every man for himself in the campaign homestretch as senatorial candidates try to woo local government officials, sometimes to the extent of junking some of their team mates.

According to Team Unity senatorial candidate Joker Arroyo, the administration bets have gone their separate ways in the last week before the elections, making solitary sorties to boost their respective candidacies.

He said their campaign has been focusing on getting the governors and mayors, even those from the opposition, to include their names in the sample ballots to be distributed on Election Day.

Arroyo said that junking was a common practice in Philippine elections.

"Even me, I'm asking some of my friends in the opposition. That's normal because it will add to your vote," he said.


PARTY-LIST CARAVAN
Supporters of the Batas party-list raise their stickers and posters in yesterday's campaign rally at the Quirino Grandstand following a big caravan through the streets of Metro Manila six days before next week's mid-term. RYAN LIM

Campaign takes toll on Sharon, kids

By Vincent Cabreza
and Cristina Arzadon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—SINGER, ACTRESS AND TV host Sharon Cuneta has fallen ill due to the rigors of her husband's last campaign tour through Northern Luzon, prompting reelectionist Sen. Francis Pangilinan to admit yesterday that he might not run an independent campaign again soon.

Pangilinan said he made a strong pitch for independence to change "traditional politics" but if made to repeat this crusade, "I'd rather not," he said.

Cuneta and daughters Miel, who's almost 3 and Frankie, who turns 7 in December, joined a family-run campaign, alongside brother-in-law, singer Gary Valenciano, as well as actor Rustom Padilla. The first leg began in Laoag City and culminated here on Monday.

Pangilinan's "K Na" caravan arrived here at the late hour of 11 p.m. but nevertheless, proceeded with a scheduled campaign concert that should have started at 7 p.m.

Tatak Kristiyano, an evangelical support group helping the caravan, said Pangilinan's convoy was delayed because on the way to Baguio, people crowded the streets for a glimpse of Cuneta.

Over 100 residents stayed at Burnham Park to wait for Cuneta and to watch her perform. Her short concert ended after midnight.

But Cuneta and Miel suffered from a cold yesterday morning, Pangilinan said.

"Somebody asked me, after 80-plus days of campaigning, do I think I made the right decision when I ran as an independent? I said yes. Would I do it all over again if I had to? I'd rather not," he said.

But he said running an independent campaign was meant to inspire more people to stand by their convictions.

According to Pangilinan, members of the administration are now in the opposition and a few members of the opposition are now in the administration.

He decided "not to add to the confusion" generated by the loyalty switching.

In the end, everyone would campaign alone, he said.

His independent campaign had affected his poll rankings, he noted, when he slipped from the top spot to fifth in the latest surveys.

NPA OR LABOR LEADER

AFP nabs slay suspect in Casiño campaign party

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE MILITARY ON TUESday filed obstruction of justice charges against Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teddy Casiño after he tried to stop a joint police-military team from arresting an alleged New People's Army member and murder suspect in Ormoc City on Monday night.

The suspect, Vincent Borja, was with Casiño, who was in the city for a campaign sortie, when he was arrested.

Lt. Col. Lope Dagoy, 19th Infantry Battalion commander, said the charges were filed against Casiño in the Ormoc City Prosecutor's Office after he physically opposed Borja's arrest.

Ormoc police and 19th IB soldiers served the arrest warrant on Borja, 36, in the house of one Teodoro Dacera in Malinao, Ormoc City, at around 8 p.m. on Monday. The warrant was issued on Dec. 4, 2006, by Regional Trial Court Judge Apolinario Buaya.

Borja, a resident of Ormoc, was accused of involvement in the killing of Sgt. Guillermo Analisan of the 19th IB who was gunned down on May 6, 2006, in the Kananga town public market, Dagoy said.

Casiño, however, described Borja, the regional coordinator of the Anakpawis party-list group, as a labor leader.

Dagoy claimed Borja was a member of the White Area Committee which organized "legal fronts" for the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The military brought Borja to the 802nd Infantry Brigade headquarters in Camp Downes in Ormoc and later to the city police station.

Casiño said he questioned the arrest because the first two arrest warrants the military presented had the name "Toto Borja." Borja's nickname is Bebot. It was the third warrant that had the right name.

Casiño's bodyguard, Jimboy Carungay, was disarmed of his 9-mm Beretta service firearm. The gun was later returned with four bullets missing, Casiño said. *With Michael Lim Ubac and Jerome Aning*

Terror suspect is a candidate

A SUSPECTED AL-QAIDA-LINKED MILITANT said Monday he's running in next week's elections to help bolster peace and development in his small town, where he sometimes reminds residents that he's a terror suspect to grab attention.

Dawud Tyrone Santos, a suspected member of a militant group of Islamic converts, said he's running to become one of eight councilors of remote Anda town in Pangasinan—a Catholic community where security officials say his group once ran a terror training camp.

Police have suspected that Santos belonged to a group called the Rajah Solaiman movement, which has been linked to militant groups like the Abu Sayyaf in the southern Philippines and the Indonesia-based Jemaah Islamiyah.

Santos says he tells villagers that he was wrongfully accused.

I'm still running – Robredo

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS' FIRST Division has declared him ineligible to hold public office because of a nationality question, but Naga Mayor Jesse Robredo is not giving up the fight.

"I am still running. I am not disqualified," Robredo said.

Comelec Commissioner Romeo Brawner said the decision which he wrote was not yet final.

"That decision was rendered by the First Division. Anybody who is not satisfied with the decision may elevate it to the commission en banc on a motion for reconsideration," Brawner said in a phone interview.

The en banc's decision could in turn be elevated to the Supreme Court for a final ruling, Brawner added.

This means the reelectionist Robredo is still in the candidates' list. He can continue to campaign and his votes will be counted.

Robredo said he has already filed a motion for reconsideration with the Comelec.

He said the Comelec decision has "confused many people" because his rivals were already "spreading news that the Comelec has disqualified me."

His supporters and allies said the Comelec decision was an act of political harassment.

Robredo, a Liberal Party member, is running against administration candidate Jojo Villafuerte, a nephew of Rep. Luis Villafuerte who is a close ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo.
Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

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Body of Pinoy killed in Iraq brought home

THE BODY OF THE FILIPINO WORKER killed in a rocket attack in Iraq's heavily fortified Green Zone on Tuesday finally arrived yesterday.

The remains of Niceforo Idulsa, who was one of four casualties of a missile strike in the US-controlled zone, were airlifted by a US military plane from a mortuary in Baghdad to Kuwait, and then flown to Manila.

Idulsa's body was released to his wife, Teresita, and two sons.

"I find it so hard to accept," said Teresita, who spoke mostly in Visayan.

She had last spoken with her husband by phone two days before the rocket attack.

Idulsa's remains will first be transported to his native Tagbilaran, Bohol and then to his wife's hometown in the the Dinagat islands off Agusan del Norte.

Based on Idulsa's documents traced by the Department of Foreign Affairs, the slain worker had entered Iraq illegally in February 2006, about two years after the Philippines enforced a ban on the deployment of Filipino workers to Iraq because of the war.

"His first stop was Kuwait where he stayed for three weeks, then he entered Baghdad. He changed employers twice: first he was employed in Kuwait and then by a US company. His job description said he was a carpenter," said Esteban Conejos Jr., the foreign undersecretary for migrant affairs. *Tarra Quismundo with Paolo Montecillo*

PHILIP MORRIS

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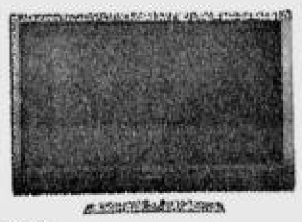

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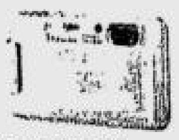
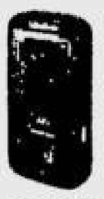


30 SONY CYBERSHOT DSC-T100 digital camera



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70 OAKLEY ROMEO 2 eyewear

100 APPLE IPod shuffle

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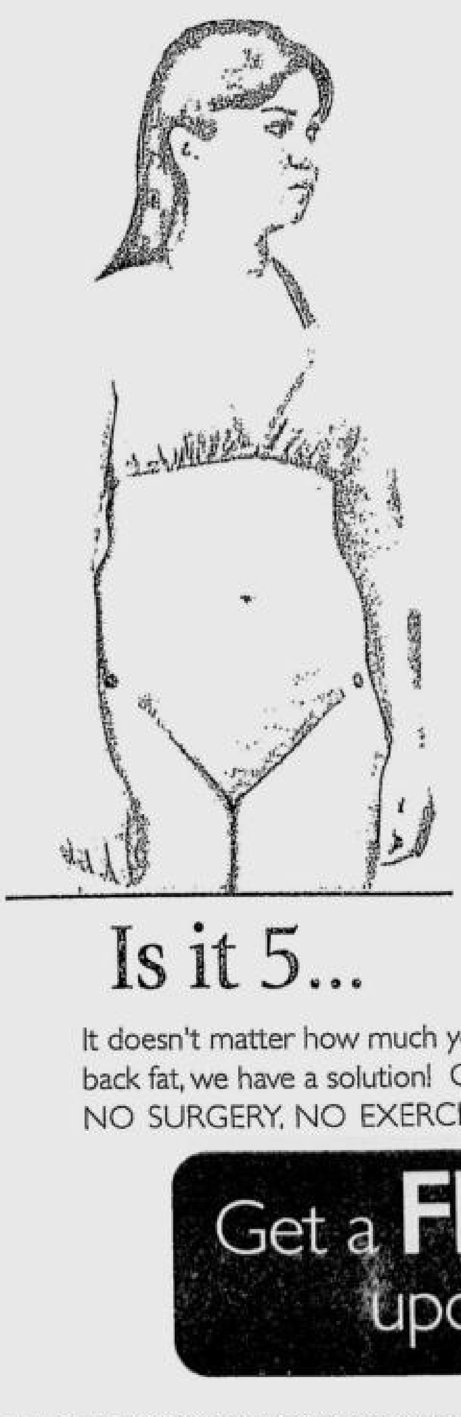

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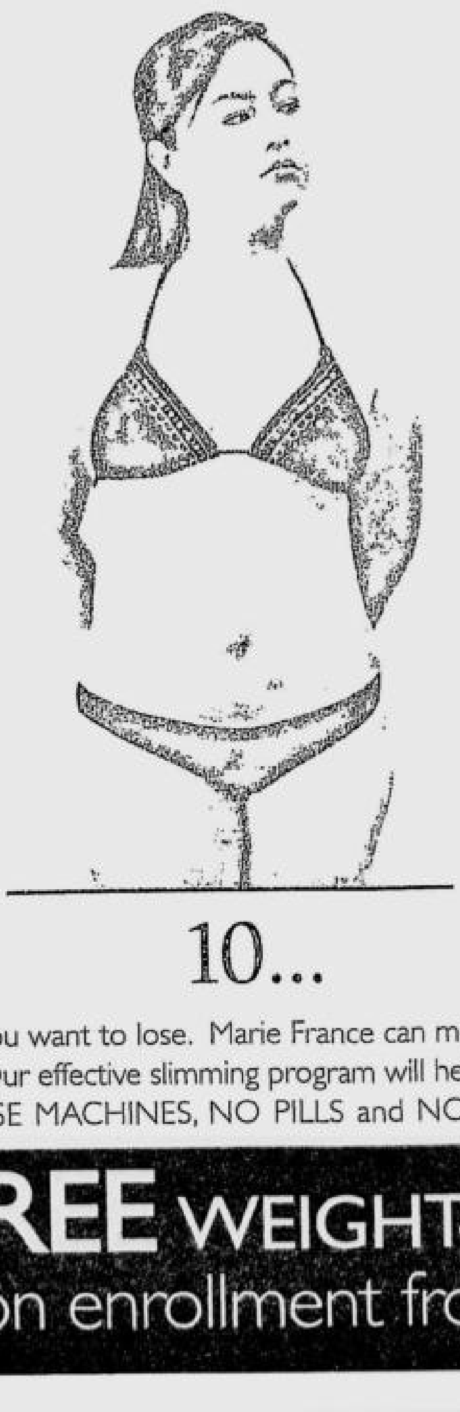

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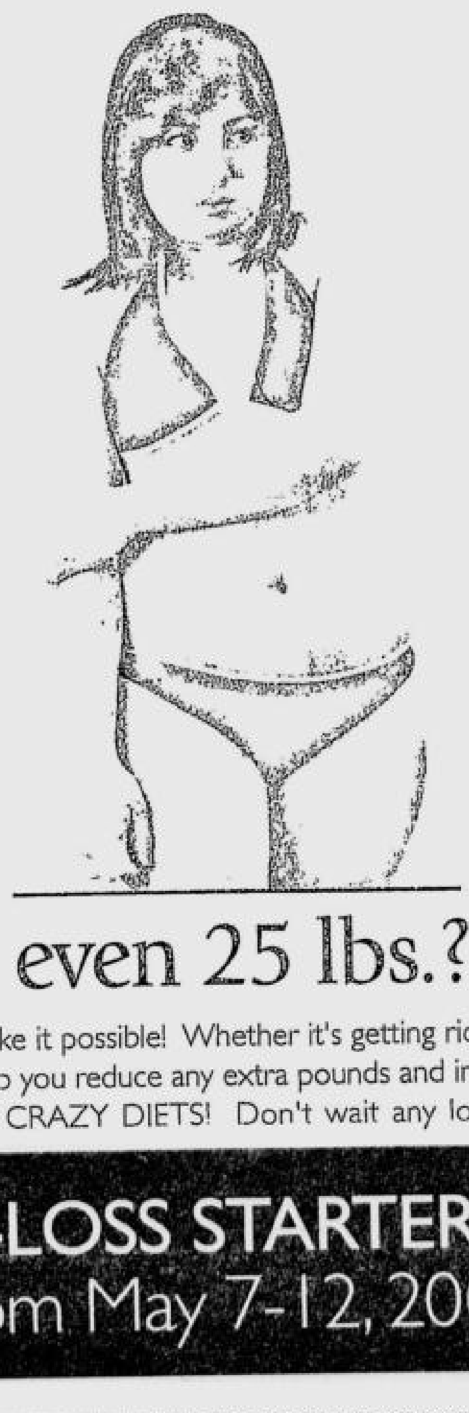

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Corrections

IN THE MAY 8 ISsue, a photo caption in Maurice Arcache's column "Without Batting an Eyelash" on Page C5 of the Lifestyle section misstated the surname of the director of the Metropolitan Museum of Manila. The director's name is Eric Zerrudo—not Noora.

* * *

THE SAME CAPTION misspelled the surname of an executive director of First Pacific Co. The director's surname is Edward Tortorici—not Tortotici.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

16 RP workers back with tales of terror

By Tarra Quismundo

SIXTEEN MORE FILIPINO WORKERS REPAtriated from Nigeria arrived home yesterday with more tales of terror in the troubled west African nation.

Like the stories told by 27 of their compatriots who arrived yesterday, two of the survivors told media how at least 30 masked men wielding high-power firearms kicked down the doors of their staffhouse in the Korean-run Afam power plant, and kidnapped 11 employees—eight Filipinos and three Koreans, including the project manager.

Two workers were reportedly left behind to process travel papers in Port Harcourt, the center of Nigeria's troubled petroleum industry and about 30 kilometers from their plant. They are also expected to arrive soon, bringing to 45 the number of Filipino workers ordered repatriated by the government.

Workers Edmund Ramirez Jr. and Julio Villasista said they were roused from sleep between 1 and 2 a.m. on Thursday by the sound of gunshots, after which they were trapped in the confusion.

"I saw the people (abductees) going out... I saw the militia men... They pushed their captives with guns and immediately boarded them into their vehicle," said Ramirez, a Caloocan City native.

Six plant guards were helpless because the rebels were better armed, he told the INQUIRER in Filipino upon his return to Manila yesterday morning.

Villasista, a safety officer at the powerplant, said the attackers killed two guards and launched grenades into the air, rousing some 200 employees of various nationalities who were sleeping in six separate quarters (Camps A to F) at the plantsite.

"We expected that we had soldiers [as our security] blocking forces outside. But there was no encounter," said Villasista.

Villasista remembers that one of those kidnapped had called him on the radio at the first sound of gunfire outside their quarters. "He said, 'Sir, what's the situation?' I told him and the rest to stay put..."

At that time, Villasista had no inkling of the terror that was soon to strike. "When I went out, there was nothing yet," he said in the vernacular.

"They knew where the top officials were... They might have gotten information from the inside... They were after money. The Filipinos who were taken were the ones nearest to the exit," added Ramirez.

All the while, the adjacent staffhouse began fleeing the campsite.

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Providing benefits to our elderly through the Senior Citizens Act (RA 7431)
Observance of March 8 as National Women's Day (RA 6949)
Rooming-In and Breastfeeding Act of 1992 (RA 7600)
Giving representation to women in the Social Security Commission (RA 7688)
Allowing illegitimate children to use the paternal surname (RA 9255)
Science And Technology Scholarship Act of 1994 (RA 7687)
Strengthening of the S&T Program (RA 8248)
Creation of the National Institute of Health (NIH) (RA 8503)

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Paid for by Friends of Angara

PRIME PROPERTIES / SHARES FOR SALE

The AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS) invites interested parties to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties / company shares of stocks / golf club shares on "cash", "as-is, where-is" basis:

Item No.	Description	Location	Minimum / Floor Price
07-1	1.5 million shares of stock of Monterrosa Dev't Corporation	150-hectare residential lot located in Bgy Batulao, Nasugbu, Batangas (near Evercrest Golf Club)	P 892,500,000.00
07-2	Rivera Golf Club Shares 945 Class A Shares 834 Class B Shares 500 Class C Shares	Riviera Golf Club, Incorporated, Silang, Cavite (Two 18-Hole Championship Golf Courses)	P 1,183,950,000.00 (selling 45% controlling interest at Riviera Golf Club, Inc)
07-3	1,577,007 sqm industrial lot	Sabang, Morong, Bataan (beside Ayala Land's Anvaya Cove Project)	P 816,889,626.00
The following properties will also be sold by way of sealed bids on cash or term basis (min. 30% down payment; 16% interest rate p.a., max. 5 yrs to pay):			
07-4	House & Lot L/A 230.9 sqm F/A 248.49 sqm	1545 2nd Street, Fabie Estate, Paco, Manila	P 3,551,215.00
07-5	House & Lot L/A 329 sqm F/A 167 sqm	B18, L4, Rosario Bayview Subd., Sucat, Muntinlupa	P 2,458,540.00
07-6	House & Lot F/A 618.98 sqm L/A 2,607 sqm	29 Sunflower Dr. Beverly Hills, Taytay, Rizal	P 7,081,592.76
07-7	291 sqm residential lot	B45 L26 Cer-Hil Subd., Quebiawan, San Fernando, Pampanga	P 321,555.00
07-8	489 sqm residential lot	#245 Concepcion, Bo. Rio-Chico, Gen. Tinio, Nueva Ecija	P 229,071.60

For interested parties, please note the following activities that will be held at the Board Room, RSBS, 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.:

Pre-Bidding Conference: May 17, 2007 10:00 a.m.
Deadline for Acceptance of Bids: May 23, 2007 10:00 a.m.
Opening of Sealed Bids: May 23, 2007 10:15 a.m.

Bidding documents shall be available starting May 11, 2007 at the Property Management Office, 3/F, RSBS Bldg., Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C. at P500.00 each.

For inquiries on Item 07-1, please call Putch or Amor at 912-0056
For inquiries on Item 07-2, please call Yas or Tammy at 911-8714 / 912-4724 / 912-3695
For inquiries on other items, please call Liza or Darwin at 912-4718

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The Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations (COCOPEA) supports A TEACHER

We, the undersigned, representing over 3,000 schools, colleges and universities, declare our unconditional support for **A TEACHER** party-list in the forthcoming May 14 elections. **A TEACHER,** which stands for **A**dvocacy for **T**eacher **E**mpowerment through **A**ction, **C**ooperation and **H**armony towards **E**ducational **R**eforms, is a national professional organization representing all educators and non-teaching school personnel in the Philippines.

We strongly endorse the legislative agenda of **A TEACHER**:

1. Advocate Education for Sustainable Development and help improve the quality of education
2. Bring to government and public attention the needs and concerns of teachers and non-teaching personnel in both public and private schools
3. Sponsor and support educational bills that provide for quality education, the professional development and welfare of teachers and non-teaching school personnel
4. Review existing educational laws and propose necessary amendments to ensure their relevance
5. Conduct research in aid of educational legislation and policy formulation
6. Advocate educational reforms and conduct various fora for the discussion of educational issues including teachers' welfare
7. Provide professional development programs for teachers and non- teaching personnel and skills trainings for the numerous unemployed licensed and unlicensed teachers to enhance their employment and livelihood opportunities
8. Provide government assistance to private schools in recognition of their complementary role with public education
9. Provide assistance to poor but deserving students, including children of teachers and non-teaching personnel

We enjoin all teachers, non-teaching school personnel, students, parents, alumni and other stakeholders to support **A TEACHER** for party-list.

A vote for **A TEACHER** is a vote for a better Philippine education.

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Comelec urged to revoke all gun permits of candidates

WITH LESS THAN A WEEK BEFORE the elections, the Commission on Elections should revoke all special gun permits given to candidates to avoid further poll-related violence.

Team Unity senatorial bet Prospero "Butch" Pichay made this proposal to prevent what he called "acts of savagery and violence that are not only tragic but will be a black mark on our image abroad."

The death toll in this year's elections has reached 90 as of May 4. The government appears to be helpless in curbing the violence which had been anticipated long before the campaign season started. An estimated 150 people died in poll-related violence in 2004.

The election violence has been blamed on the lax enforcement of rules against loose firearms and the government's tolerance of politicians maintaining private armies.

Pichay said he would voluntarily surrender to the Comelec his special permit exempting him from the political gun ban to set an example to other candidates.

He said he was advised by the police to get the exemption and beef up his security at the start of the campaign. But the administration candidate said he was now putting all his trust on the police for his security.

Pichay said the heightened poll-related killings should urge sectors to take a united stand against violence.

Gil Cabacungan Jr.

Lakas-Kampi feud takes toll on kingmakers of Davao Norte

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE WORSENING FEUD BETWEEN THE country's biggest political parties, Lakas and Kampi, has driven a wedge between Davao's kingmakers—banana king Antonio O. Floirendo and his long-time ally and brother-in-law, presidential adviser for new government centers Rodolfo Del Rosario.

Floirendo's son, Davao del Norte Antonio "Tonyboy" Floirendo, revealed that his family is planning to drop its support for Del Rosario's return as governor (he served as Davao del Norte governor from 1998 to 2004) for coalescing with Lakas's bitter rival, Kampi, the party of President Macapagal-Arroyo which has audaciously raided Lakas's ranks to boost its membership.

"He (Del Rosario) must cut his ties with Kampi," Floirendo said.

Tonyboy Floirendo has rued the adverse effect of the battle for dominance between administration allies which was driven by Kampi's desire to build a power base in time for the 2010 elections.

"It has caused division not only in our family but also in politics," said Del Rosario referring to Kampi's strategy of pitting allies against allies in the local elections to achieve its goal of trumping Lakas.

Betrayal

Floirendo feels doubly bad about Del Rosario's seeming betrayal considering that he himself was supposed to be the one gunning for Davao del Norte's governor's seat this year after serving three terms in Congress.

Floirendo claimed he withdrew from the race after learning of Del Rosario's ambitions in order to "spare my parents, especially my father, the ugly disintegration of all that we have worked so hard to build."

"I love my father and heeded to his request to run," said Floirendo.

Tonyboy Floirendo claimed that Del Rosario, whom his father had considered a trusted lieutenant and had groomed like his own son, had formed a Kampi slate in two cities and all towns in District 2 of Davao del Norte that would battle head-on with Floirendo's Lakas bets.

Both Tonyboy and Del Rosario are co-chair of Lakas in the province but the latter was absent during the proclamation rally where Del Rosario was represented only by his wife, Inday, sister of Antonio.

"He (Del Rosario) not only unsettled a closely-knit family unity but also caused unnecessary political turbulence in what should have been a smooth flight for Lakas in the province," said Floirendo.

After turning back on the family's long time ally, Floirendo is reportedly planning to throw its support to incumbent governor Gementzia, a former Lakas member who was forced to go to the Genuine Opposition after Del Rosario declared to his bid for the post.

NPA holds Army sergeant prisoner

COMMUNIST GUERRILLAS SAID THEY ARE holding a recently captured officer as a prisoner of war and are investigating him for possible human rights violations while fighting insurgents.

A New People's Army command operating in the southern Mindanao region identified the captive as Staff Sgt. Alberto Baludoya, a commander of an army outpost in Cateel town in Davao Oriental.

Baludoya has been involved in counterinsurgency operations for 17 years, they said.

"No harm shall befall POW SSgt. Baludoya as the New People's Army has shown in numerous prisoners of war cases that it upholds its policy of humane and lenient treatment of prisoners of war," rebel spokesman Roel Agustin II said in a statement.

The rebels did not say when or how they captured Baludoya. A special investigating body was set up to determine any "possible war crimes and other serious violations of human rights" that Baludoya may have committed in his long involvement in counterinsurgency operations, the rebels said.

There was no immediate military reaction to the rebel statement.

In 2004, the rebels captured two army officers during a clash in Camarines Sur. They freed the two after five months of jungle captivity for humanitarian reasons.

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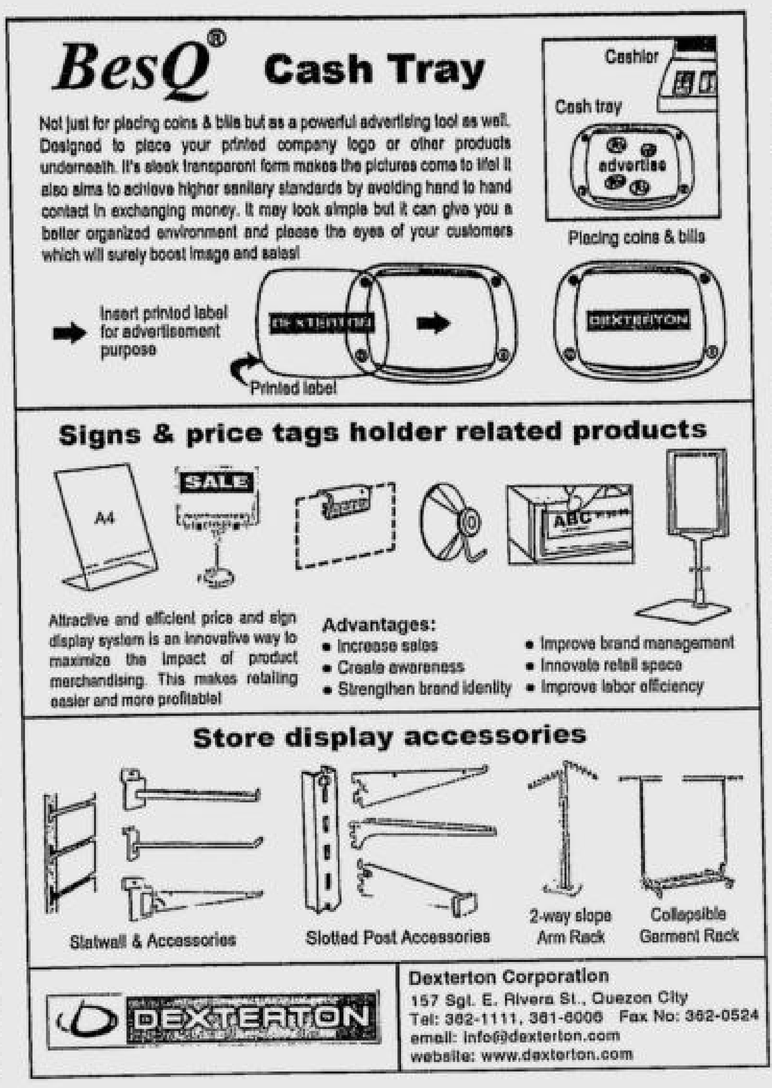
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ANNOUNCEMENT

A. The JBC is accepting applications for judgeship positions in the following:

1. Vacant Courts

NCJR
MALABON CITY
RTC, Br. 74

REGION III
PAMPANGA
MTCC, Br. 2, San Fernando City
MCTC, Sta. Ana-Candaba

REGION IV
CAVITE
MTC, Br. 1, Dasmariñas

REGION VI
AKLAN
RTC, Br. 8, Kalibo

REGION X
AGUSAN DEL NORTE
MTCC, Br. 1, Butuan City

2. Courts which will be vacant due to the compulsory retirement of the incumbent judges therein on the dates indicated in parenthesis:

NCJR
MALABON CITY
METC, Br. 55 (24 July 2007)
QUEZON CITY
RTC, Br. 222 (10 July 2007)
RTC, Br. 217 (11 July 2007)
VALENZUELA CITY
RTC, Br. 172 (29 July 2007)

REGION III
BATAAN
RTC, Br. 1, Balanga (02 August 2007)
1st MCTC, Dinalupihan-Hermosa (22 June 2007)

REGION IV
QUEZON
RTC, Br. 63, Calauag (24 August 2007)
RTC, Br. 65, Infanta (08 June 2007)

REGION VI
ANTIQUE
MTC, Br. 1, San Jose (12 June 2007)

REGION VII
CEBU
RTC, Br. 56, Mandaue City (08 August 2007)

REGION VIII
BILIRAN
RTC, Br. 16, Naval (15 July 2007)

REGION IX
ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR
RTC, Br. 23, Molave (06 July 2007)

REGION XI
COMPOSTELA VALLEY
2nd MCTC Monkayo-Montevista (25 July 2007)

Applications or recommendations must be submitted NOT LATER THAN June 11, 2007, to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Flr. Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Manila (Tel. No. 552-9512 Fax No. 552-9598; e-mail address jbc@supremecourt.gov.ph; jbc_supremecourt@yahoo.com.ph.

B. The JBC also announces that the following are applicants for different judgeship positions:

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (RTC): *(REGION I) – BAGUIO CITY, BENGUET: (Br. 7)* **AGCAOILI**, Alfredo P.; **AQUINO**, Manuel R.; **CALONGE**, Diosdado V.; **CAWED**, Mia Joy O.; **CONTRERAS**, Jaime E.; **CORPUZ**, Ferdinand M.; **DE JESUS**, Jose Tereso U. Jr.; **DIASEN**, Marcos C. Jr.; **DUMLAO**, Florentino R. Jr.; **FANGAYEN**, Robert P.; **FLORENDO**, Cynthia M.; **GASCON**, Jovencio S.; **GERONA**, Rofebar F.; **IMPERIAL**, Juliet S.; **JARAVATA**, Ethelwolda A.; **LAOAGAN**, Agapito K. Jr.; **LOQUILLANO**, Ma. Theresa SJ.; **MALABAGUIO**, Arthur O.; **MARATA**, Gonzalo P.; **MIARAL**, Ismael G.; **MUERONG**, Honor Zeny N.; **PAMINTUAN**, Ricardo T.; **PILAPIL**, Joannes V.; **PLATA**, Ruben R.; **RIVERA**, Ma. Ligaya I.; **RODULFO**, Juan T.; **RUIZ**, Joseph Cedrick O.; **SANTILLAN**, Hannibal V.; **TABORA**, Mona Lisa T.; **TOBIA**, Robert H.; *CABUGAO, ILOCOS SUR: (Br. 24)* **ALEJANDRO**, Nida B.; **GASCON**, Juvencio S.; **INES**, Iluminada M.; **MUERONG**, Honor Zeny N. *(REGION III) CABANATUAN CITY, NUEVA ECIJA: (Br. 86)* **CALDERON**, Jose Manuel J.; **CATIVO**, Teresita N.; **CHAUHAN**, Anita M.; **CRUZ**, Serafin C.; **DIONISIO**, Gaudencio D.; **FAJARDO**, Alejandro D. Jr.; **FLORENDO**, Cynthia M; **FLORENDO**, Floro F.; **GENILO**, Raymund R.; **GUERRERO**, Fernando Y. Jr.; **HERNANDEZ**, Ireneo D.; **JURADO**, Cyrus D.; **LABASTIDA**, Philip G.; **LAPUZ**, Antonio L. Jr.; **LEDDA**, Dionisio D. Jr.; **MANGLICMOT**, Hermo A.; **MAYNIGO**, Wilfredo L.; **PAMULAR**, Ramon D.; **PEREZ**, Angelo C.; **SIO**, Primo G. Jr.; **STA. CRUZ**, Manuel B. Jr.; **TOBIA**, Robert H.; **ZURAEK**, Merianthe M. *GUIMBA, NUEVA ECIJA: (Br. 32)* **AGANON**, Cesar L.; **DOJILLO**, Jaime L. Jr.; **FLORENDO**, Cynthia M.; **JURADO**, Cyrus D.; **MALLARE**, Efren B.; **MANGLICMOT**, Hermo A.; **MUERONG**, Honor Zeny N.; **PAMULAR**, Ramon D. *(REGION IV) – PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, PALAWAN: (Br. 50)* **ALMAJAR**, Romeo A.; **BAGUYO**, Leah DR.; **BAUTISTA**, Jose L. Jr.; **BENAVIDEZ**, Pastor J.; **CABILES**, Bernandino L.; **CAYETANO**, Paz Soledad R.; **CAÑETE**, Evelyn C.; **DE GUZMAN**, Homobono S.; **DE LOS REYES**, Roberto A.; **GUTIERREZ**, Jose G.; **LEGAZPI**, Leopoldo Mario P.; **PAMULAR**, Ramon D.; **PASIA**, Pio M.; **RAMOS**, Benjamin R.; **RUIZ**, Joseph Cedrick O.; **SOCRATES**, Ma. Rowena P.; **URBI**, Emil G.; **USMAN**, Jose Bayani J. *(REGION V) – NAGA CITY: (Brs. 22 & 23)* **ROSALES**, Manuel M. *IRIGA CITY, CAMARINES SUR: (Brs. 34 & 60)* **DESEMBRANA**, Raul Y.; **ROSALES**, Manuel M.

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT IN CITIES (MTCC): *(REGION I) DAGUPAN CITY, PANGASINAN (Br. 3)* **ASUNCION**, Damaso P. Jr.; **FLORES**, Cristeta C.; **GAJARDO**, Pablo A. Jr.; **GALVAN**, Roland B.; **IMPERIAL**, Juliet S.; **MARATA**, Gonzalo P.; **MARCELLA**, Santiago J. Jr.; **NABUA**, Crisma V.; **ORPILLA**, Aileen R.; **PURISIMA**, Willie G.; **REYES**, Remedios B.; **SORIANO**, Ma. Lourdes D.; **VALLE**, Aurora E.

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT (MTC): *(REGION III) – MARIVELES, BATAAN:* **ASUNCION**, Damaso P. Jr.; **MORALES**, Baltazar A.; **TUAZON**, Alberto R. *TALAVERA, NUEVA ECIJA:* **BALLESTEROS**, Carmelito O.; **BUENAVENTURA**, Noel J.; **CALDERON**, Jose Manuel J.; **MALLARE**, Efren B.; **SAGAMPUD**, Joseph D. Jr.; **VILLAFLOR**, Felicisimo C.; **VITERBO**, Frazierwin V. *(REGION VI) – KALIBO, AKLAN:* **TOLENTINO**, Ma. Maya Bien M.

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (MCTC): *(REGION I) PASUQUIN-BURGOS, ILOCOS NORTE:* **AGBISIT**, Richardson G.; **CALUPIG**, Rommel G.; **LUCERO**, Rosemarie R.; **MUSNI**, Francisco A.; **PINGAO**, Fredelito G.; **SANTOS**, Edgar D.; **TUMANENG**, Gifford Domingo Eusebio L. *(REGION III) – CABIAO-SAN ISIDRO, NUEVA ECIJA:* **BALLESTEROS**, Carmelito O.; **FARRERO**, Julieto F.; **MALLARE**, Efren B.; **VITERBO**, Frazierwin V. *(REGION VI) – LIBERTAD-CALUYA, ANTIQUE:* **SOSITO**, Julia Cecily C.

The public may submit sworn complaint, written report, or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants not later than May 21, 2007 to the JBC Secretariat.

All applicants for all judicial positions must submit to the JBC Secretariat ASAP via fax, mail or e-mail their updated JBC Form 1, current cellphone and landline numbers, and current residence and e-mail addresses.

May 08, 2007.

MS Villarama
MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA
Clerk of Court &
Ex Officio Secretary

(PDI–May 9, 2007)

4 MNLF rebs slain in Sulu despite Comelec call for truce

ZAMBOANGA CITY—AT LEAST four Moro National Liberation Front members were killed during a clash with soldiers in Kalinggalang Caluang, Sulu yesterday, despite a 10-day ceasefire called by the Commission on Elections in the run-up to the May 14 elections.

Sporadic clashes have erupted in Sulu between a splinter group of the MNLF and government troops since January resulting in the displacement of thousands of people.

Maj. Eugene Batara, spokesperson of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), said those killed on Tuesday were followers of Ustadz Habier Malik.

It was Malik's group that was responsible for hostaging at least 25 government officials, including Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino of the National Capital Region Command, for about two days last February.

Malik's men have since repeatedly clashed with the military.

Batara said the soldiers were conducting clearing operations yesterday when they encountered the group. He said the gun battle in Barangay Kambin started at around 6 a.m. and lasted for five hours.

Lt. Gen. Eugenio Cedo, Westmincom chief, said the conduct of preemptive strikes, security patrols and maneuvers, limited attacks, checkpoints, reconnaissance and pursuit operations are being carried out so lawless groups would not pose a danger to the civilians.

Batara said his command had instructions from AFP Chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon to pursue the Malik group and similar groups threatening the peace in Sulu.

Soldiers who are not involved in the military operations will perform election security duties like manning checkpoints, he said.

James Jimenez, the Comelec spokesperson, said they were saddened by the renewed violence. *Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

Court expected to allow Misuari to campaign, vote

By Kimberly Tan

DETAINED MORO REBEL LEADER NUR MISUARI is expected to be allowed by a Makati court to fly to Sulu for six days to campaign for governor of the province and to cast his vote.

Misuari appeared before Judge Winlove Dumayas of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 59 yesterday to seek permission to leave for Jolo from May 10-15.

Assistant state prosecutor Romeo Senson told the court he had no objections.

After the hearing, Misuari told reporters he was grateful to the prosecution for not objecting to his petition.

Dumayas said he would issue an order soon, but at press time yesterday, he still had not released the order.

A member of his staff said the judge had already drafted the order, but was still studying it.

Misuari, honorary chair of the Moro National Liberation Front, is facing rebellion charges in connection with an uprising by his followers in Jolo in November 2001.

He has been under house arrest since mid-2006 in New Manila, Quezon City near St Luke's Medical Center, where he was previously taken after complaining of various ailments, including hypertension.

2 Sandigan, CA justices lead race for SC slot

By Leila B. Salaverria

TWO JUSTICES FROM THE SANDIGANbayan and the Court of Appeals topped the list of eight nominees chosen by the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) to replace retired Supreme Court Justice Romeo Callejo, who left the high tribunal last month.

The list will be submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo who will choose Callejo's successor.

Getting seven votes each from the JBC were Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Teresita de Castro and Court of Appeals Justice Martin Villarama, according to a JBC source who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, a member of the JBC, confirmed the identities of those who got the top votes.

Next highest was Justice Ruben Reyes who got six votes.

List of nominees

Getting five votes each were Labor Secretary and former Court of Appeals Justice Arturo Brion, Court of Tax Appeals Presiding Justice Ernesto Acosta, Court of Appeals Justice Edgardo Cruz and Sandiganbayan Justices Gregory Ong and Francisco Villaruz.

The eight-member JBC met yesterday morning to come up with a list of nominees.

Gonzalez earlier said he thought De Castro's involvement in the plunder case against deposed president Joseph Estrada would work against her appointment to the high tribunal.

De Castro chairs the Sandiganbayan special division that was hearing the case. The trial, which recently concluded, awaits resolution.

Gonzalez said that until the case was finished, De Castro might not be elevated to the Supreme Court.

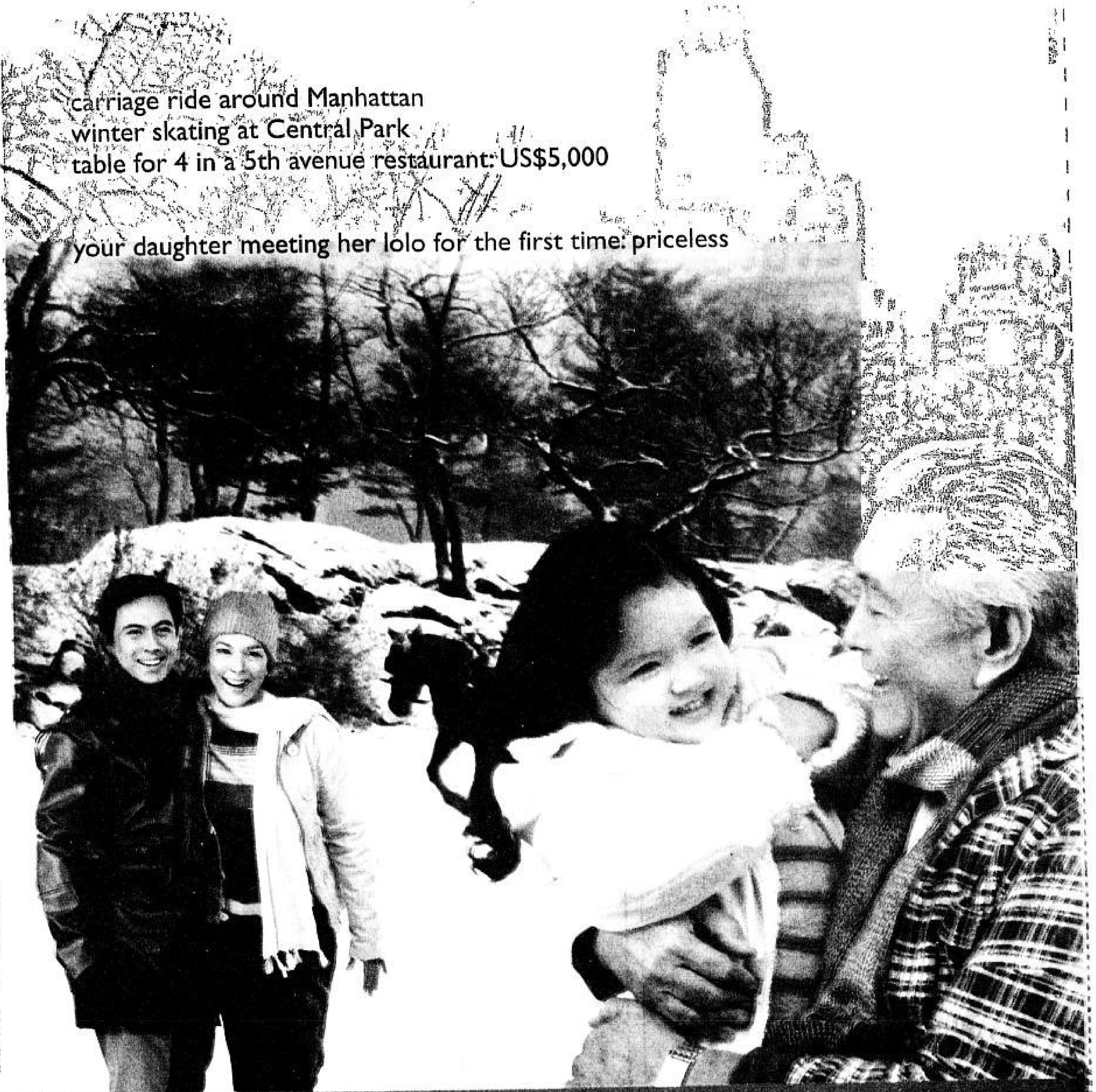
Board member

Prior to joining the Sandiganbayan, De Castro served as assistant chief state counsel at the Department of Justice. She is also a member of the board of trustees of the Philippine Judicial Academy.

She was also nominated to fill in the vacancy created by the appointment of Reynato Puno as Supreme Court Chief Justice following the retirement of Artemio Panganiban. The post, however, went to former Solicitor General Antonio Eduardo Nachura.

Villarama, on the other hand, used to be a Pasig City regional trial court judge before his appointment to the Court of Appeals. He is married to Supreme Court clerk of court Luisa Villarama.

He was given an award by the Supreme Court for his efficient management of cases at the Pasig City RTC.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Terms of endearment mark GO's final push

From page A1

country, making themselves known in order to create an "awareness" about their candidacies.

In a few days, the candidates will know whether the "awareness" has turned into "endearment" and whether that "endearment" has turned into votes.

In an interview, Osmeña said the traditional style of campaigning by "shaking hands and kissing babies" could still work, but it's no longer realistic in a media-driven society.

Identifying effective endorsers, pinpointing strengths and weaknesses and knowing the peculiarities of a specific region can guide the candidate on where to campaign and what approach to use in convincing the voters.

Cory magic

Bicol, for instance, has a history of voting for a Bicolano candidate.

This explains why Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, who is from Tarlac, has "high awareness but a low conversion rate in Bicol," said his campaign manager, former Bataan Rep. Florencio "Butch" Abad.

Abad said his staff had found a formula to offset this—by making former President Corazon Aquino, who ranked high in "endorsement appeal," campaign for her son in Bicol, as well as in the Visayas, an administration bailiwick since the 2001 elections.

Big 3

Cory Aquino, former President Joseph Estrada and Fernando Poe Jr.'s widow, Susan Roces, have emerged as the top three political endorsers in a survey commissioned by GO.

According to the survey, 36 percent of the respondents said they would vote for whoever Estrada, Aquino and Roces endorsed, against 18 percent who said they would vote for those who President Macapagal-Arroyo endorsed.

Detained on mutiny charges, opposition senatorial candidate and ex-Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes IV has not had a chance to wage a full campaign and create the element of "awareness."

Endearing qualities

"But he has a high conversion rate," said Oyie Averilla, a professor at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) and one of Trillanes' campaign managers.

Averilla's group conducted a survey on Trillanes' chances. They found out that a large sector still didn't know Trillanes was a candidate. But among those who knew, a high number indicated they "preferred" Trillanes over other candidates, Averilla said.

"This means, Trillanes is *madaling dalhin* (easy to carry). He's got endearing qualities," he said.

Independent candidate Gregorio Honasan's final push includes a *miting de avance* at Plaza Miranda, then a final swing across the northern Luzon provinces and the Calabarzon areas.

Since April 21, when he was released on bail after being held for months on rebellion charges, Honasan has been campaigning daily. He jumped to between 5th and 12th places (with 35.7 percent of Filipino adults saying they will vote for him) from 8th to 15th places (30.5 percent), according to the May 1 survey of polling outfit Pulse Asia.

5 dead, 35 wounded in Tacurong bombing

From page A1

across from a restaurant where politicians and election officials were meeting ahead of next week's balloting.

Most of the victims were tricycle drivers and passengers.

Sultan Kudarat Gov. Pax Mangudadatu condemned the "dastardly attack against innocent civilians."

"I believe karma would befall whoever was responsible for the attack. God is just. He would not allow wrongdoing to go unpunished," he said.

Santos said one of the five fatalities died on the spot and the others in the hospital. The injured were wounded and were taken to Tamondong Hospital, Quijano Hospital and Sandig Medical Clinic.

Improvised device

"We are still investigating the motive behind the bomb attack and the group responsible for the bombing," Chief Insp. Alexis Yap Jr. said. No one has claimed responsibility for the blast.

AN EXPLOSION in Tacurong, Sultan Kudirat, hurt 35, including this little girl, when it tore through a tricycle terminal near a packed public market. JEOFFREY MAITEM/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Initial police reports said the blast was caused by an improvised explosive device, according to Mayor Lino Montilla.

Rep. Teng Mangudadatu, who was at the political meeting, told dxMS radio in Cotabato City that a small crater was gouged out of the pavement by the blast.

The area was littered with shoes and slippers of the victims and other people who scampered away in panic, he said.

Blast shook neighborhood

Roman Catholic Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo, whose office is near the site, said: "The explosion was so loud and it shook the neighborhood."

Tacurong was hit by bombs last year believed set off by the al-Qaida-linked extremist Abu Sayyaf group and its allies in the Indonesia-based terror group Jemaah Islamiyah.

Last Dec. 28, four people were wounded in an explosion at a mall in Tacurong, and four others were wounded in another blast near the market two months earlier. *Reports from Aquiles Z. Zonio and Jeffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao, AFP and AP*

Mike A gets doctors' OK to go back to work

From page A1

heart surgery on April 9.

President Macapagal-Arroyo cancelled her only appointment for the day—a visit from domestic helper Sarah Dematera who was spared from the death penalty in Saudi Arabia—to be with her husband during his checkup at St. Luke's Medical Center.

Dr. Juliet Gopez-Cervantes, Mike Arroyo's main attending physician, earlier said he had wanted to return to work to fight off depression.

She said Arroyo felt depressed after being forced to limit his physical activities and being asked to avoid stressful situations to facilitate his recovery and prevent an aneurysm.

"Of course, even for a normal individual who is restricted from going back to his normal life, there is some sort of depression since he cannot get back to (his usual activities)," Cervantes told the INQUIRER recently.

She said the restrictions also affected Arroyo's appetite and general well-being.

Since his discharge, Arroyo has been going back to the hospital for cardiac rehabilitation every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

He passed all tests

Ms Arroyo and her husband went to the hospital before 7 a.m. yesterday and left at around 4 p.m., according to SLMC vice president for customer affairs Marilen Lagniton.

Lagniton said Mike Arroyo was very cheerful when he and the President left, and stressed that the visit "was just a checkup."

"He passed all tests. We didn't see any problems," Dr. Rommel Cariño said.

It was Cariño who performed the aneurysmectomy and triple bypass on Arroyo after the President's husband was diagnosed with a dissecting aortic aneurysm, which involved a tear in the arch of the aorta, the biggest blood vessel in the body.

Aorta has improved

Cariño said Arroyo's vital organs were monitored during the two-hour checkup and were found to be in good condition.

He said a CT scan showed that parts of his aorta had even strengthened and the synthetic graft placed on the torn arch was stable.

"His blood pressure and heart rate are well-controlled. His diet is OK, he likes his weight now," Cariño said.

Cariño said that because of the good results, doctors granted Arroyo's request to be allowed to go back to work.

"He can go to his office but only for half-a-day for the next two weeks," Cariño said.

Busy campaigning

"He was very happy that he can go back to work," he added.

Cariño said the doctors allowed this because it would be part of his cardiac rehabilitation.

The Arroyos' only daughter, Luli, had been accompanying her father to his cardiac rehab sessions. But she was not around yesterday, and neither were her two brothers—Juan Miguel and Dato, who were campaigning in their bids for congressional seats in Pampanga and Camarines Sur, respectively.

Top AFP officers tell soldiers to back TU, Palparan ...

From page A1

military should not resort to extralegal means. Soldiers are told that through voting, we can choose our leaders," he said.

Torres said that in the past, soldiers did not care about their votes.

"Today, military personnel respond to that call. Come May 14, they will have election duties—that is, to vote wisely and not to waste their votes," he said.

Torres also said that there was indeed a guideline being circulated to soldiers on the ground—to vote for candidates who could "help the military carry out its mission" and who were "sympathetic to the morale and welfare of the military."

He said there were no specific political groups or candidates named in the guideline.

"We are not naming organizations. We don't force soldiers; we do not dictate whom they should vote for," Torres said.

Raid on Suara

But members of the militant party-list group Suara Bangsamoro are not buying Torres' line.

Suara chair Zaynab Ampatuan said that aside from telling voters—including soldiers—to junk militant groups, the military had also embarked on a campaign aimed at harassing those critical of the Arroyo administration.

Ampatuan said that on Sunday afternoon, members of the Army's 66th Infantry Battalion raided the headquarters of the Suara Bangsamoro in Malita, Davao del Sur.

She said the soldiers interrogated two Suara volunteers for more than an hour.

"The soldiers asked how the party was able to establish chapters in Davao del Sur, as well as the names of the party leaders," Ampatuan said.

She said the soldiers took pictures of the volunteers while interrogating them, and confiscated Suara campaign materials.

Ampatuan said the soldiers also warned the volunteers against campaigning for Suara and other party-list groups supposedly fronting for the communist New People's Army.

"What happened belies the statements of the Armed Forces chief of staff, Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., that the military would stay away from politics in the 2007 election," Ampatuan said.

'Liquidation'

Militant groups have also accused the military of embarking on a campaign to "liquidate" their members.

In Pikit, North Cotabato, Suara member Usman Ali was shot dead by an unidentified gunman on Sunday.

Ali, 40, was the acting principal of the Dungguan Elementary School. *Reports from Jeoffrey Maitem, Joselle Badilla and Jeffrey M. Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao*

SECTORAL GROUPS CALL FOR BOYCOTT OF SENATE POLLS

Various urban-based groups in Luzon are calling for a boycott of next week's senatorial elections on the belief that the new Senate that will convene in July 2007 will be no different from the outgoing one: an expensive debating club with minuscule legislative output and serving as a mere springboard for the 2010 political agendas of many of its members.

In a manifesto, the Koalisyon ng Mamamayan para Boykotin ang Senado (KMBS)—a coalition composed of more than 20 progressive groups—urged voters to just focus on electing the best candidates for congressional and local posts contested in the May 14 elections—and skip voting for senatorial bets altogether as a collective protest against the appalling erosion of the once-revered Senate into a non-performing legislative chamber that politicians have turned into a launching pad for their personal and partisan interests.

"Boycotting the senatorial race is our moral equivalent of war on hate and obsolete politics, of which the Senate has regrettably become a fertile breeding ground," said **Ricardo Najera**, KMBS convenor/spokesperson and concurrent president of the People's Urban Poor Coordinating Council.

Alongside Najera, the other signatories to the boycott manifesto are **Eusebio Blanquit,** deputy spokesperson of KMBS; **Danilo Jimenez,** president of Old Capitol Site TODA; **Belen Beltar,** chairperson of the Samahan sa Palupa sa Commonwealth Federation Inc.; **Clarita Martinez,** president of the Kababaihan Para sa Bayan-QC; **Beltran Abellera,** chairman of the BASIFODA-QC; **Orlando Lampa,** president of the Federation of Alert Citizens of Makati; **Ralph Yap,** chairman of the Maagay Brotherhood Organization-Antipolo City; and **Jeff Salen,** chairman of the Kapuso Multi-Purpose Coop.

The other signatories are **Ernesto Espanilla,** president of the El Samores Society; **Marlita Polbo,** president of the JB Angeles Homeowners Association; **Vicky Morante,** chairperson of the Samahan ng Kababaihan sa Floodway; **Pat Peler,** president of the Kabalikat Neighborhood Organization; **Precy Rote,** president, PINAGPALA; **Domingo Divina,** president of the Kasipagan Gulod Homeowners Association (KAGUHA); **Rommel Sevilla,** chairman of the National Federation of Computer Technologists, Inc. (NAFECOT) and **Darwin Reyes,** president of the Masikap Homeowners Association.

Najera said there was real basis for the widespread fear that the next Senate will live up to its shameful reputation as the "most expensive debating club" in the country, which would continuously engage in obstructionist politics instead of engaging in what voters have elected senators to do in the first place, which is to pass laws and advocate causes beneficial to the poor and other sectors on the fringes of Philippine society.

"One could arrive at this gloomy forecast for the incoming Senate just by looking at the present cast of senatorial wannabes from both the administration and opposition camps," Najera said

In their manifesto, the KMBS officials said the senators, after the convening and organization of the chamber in July, "will immediately plunge into an orgy of senseless expose in a mindless and desperate effort to abort the country's newfound economic dynamism."

They said the Senate will remain lethargic and unconcerned with the clamor for work and good legislation, and two re-enacted national budgets had resulted from the failure of most senators to do their primary job of writing laws.

"The blurred political lines and shifting political alliances are also a sure formula for a Senate that will not pay attention to the serious work of legislation and advocating good causes for our people," their manifesto said.

It asserted that, "The single biggest proof of such an anomaly—and insult to the electorate—is that erstwhile critics of President Arroyo are now on her pro-administration ticket while her erstwhile allies responsible for the downfall of former President Estrada are now on Estrada's opposition slate."

"Filipinos do not want the emergence of another "good-for-nothing" Senate that the taxpayers will support through their honest labor and toil," the manifesto said. "Let us do away with this political aberration and abomination by boycotting the Senate race so voters can fully dedicate their discerning and wise votes to the local and congressional races."

"Boycotting the May 14 senatorial elections is the Filipinos' moral option," Najera said.

PAID ADVT

Lakeshore developer cited outstanding by Creba

MEXICO, PAMPANGA - The Chamber of Real Estate & Builders' Associations Inc (CREBA) bestowed the most coveted Developer of the Year (Planned Community) award to Central Country Estate Inc (CCEI), owner and developer of the Lakeshore Estate. Creba national president Pedro Tario and Congressman Eduardo Zialcita presented the award. CCEI president and CEO, architect Nestor S. Mangio received the plaque during the ceremonies held on April 26, at the Rigodon Ballroom of the Manila Hotel.

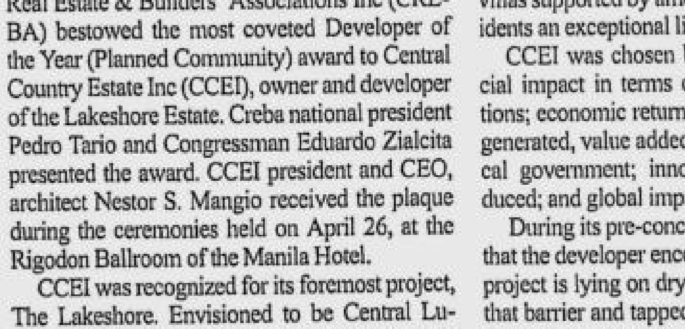
CCEI was recognized for its foremost project, The Lakeshore. Envisioned to be Central Luzon's future leisure hub, the development is strategically located at kilometer 71 along North Luzon Expressway here in Mexico. It is a self-contained community developed as a residential, recreational, and commercial facility, with waterfront ambiance and resort amenities at standards comparable with the best in the world. The houses are cozy Italian-Mediterranean-inspired villas supported by amenities that provide its residents an exceptional lifestyle.

CCEI was chosen based on Lakeshore's social impact in terms of cost-benefit considerations; economic returns in terms of employment generated, value added and the impact on the local government; innovative approaches introduced; and global impact.

During its pre-conception, one major obstacle that the developer encountered is the fact that the project is lying on dry land. They broke through that barrier and tapped the natural water table of the site in order to create the first ever man-made lined lake in the Central Luzon. The lake then, became the focal point of the development. They also transplanted 15,000 units of mature trees at 10 to 20 years old and relocated some 5,000 mature trees from Clark, which were in the way of the proposed Clark-Subic road. Since they value the importance of open spaces, the planners allotted 50 percent of it in the first phase.

The project has become the benchmark of most developments in the Philippines and especially admired by developers and investors abroad.

The "Developer of the Year" is the highlight of the Pillar Awards, a special project of the Creba Council of Leaders which is composed of former Creba national presidents.



ARCHITECT Mangio, Central Country Estate Inc president and CEO is congratulated by Vice President Noli De Castro for winning the Developer of the Year award. They are joined by CREBA national president Pedro Tario (left) and Florentino Dulalia, Jr. (right).

ADVT

Poll watchdogs learn from Garci: Focus on canvass

From page A1

convenors of the newly organized Lente (Legal Network for Truthful Elections.

An ER is the document on which is tallied the 200-250 votes cast per precinct.

"Before there was *dagdag-bawas* (vote-padding and -shaving), we thought that cheating was mostly done on election day itself, through vote-buying, flying voters, etc., and during the counting. But it is at the canvassing that wholesale fraud is committed; so the 'lesson' is not to lose focus come canvassing time," he said.

Eric Alvia, secretary general of Namfrel (National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections), echoed Medina's concern: "We only focused on ERs before."

With the country still stuck with manual elections, it takes days for volunteers to start spotting discrepancies between individual ERs and the resulting Certificates of Canvass (COCs), the tally of ERs gathered in a municipality or city), he lamented.

By the time municipal, city and provincial COCs start coming out, "two to four weeks" had already passed since Election Day.

Human interventions

In that span of time, Alvia said, a lot of "human interventions" could have taken place—the bribery of canvassing board members, tampering or switching of COCs.

And by then, at the height of the canvassing process, the number of active Namfrel volunteers would have dropped to "25 percent" of their original size during Election Day.

"Only one out of four volunteers would still be reporting. The rest would have returned to their jobs, businesses, schools," Alvia said.

Their ranks have so thinned that there would be no one left to "return to the municipality or city" where the discrepancies occurred and produce the ERs covered by questionable COCs. (An ER is considered the more reliable source document since it was produced "closest" to the polling day, executed by the teachers who oversaw the balloting.)

"Who else can we give instructions to?" Alvia said. Namfrel may have accumulated data possibly indicating massive fraud, yet that data could not be "acted upon" quickly enough for lack of personnel.

Missing element

With Lente around, perhaps this missing element would now be in place—a recognized, nonpartisan legal team that can immediately file a manifestation or protest based on the information gathered by the other volunteers, Alvia said.

While the watchers have the zeal, the power of faith, and probably the numbers to cover enough ground, they realize they are up against formidable, mostly unseen forces capable of pulling off another "Hello Garci."

With "lessons" learned from the "Garci" scandal, the poll watchers undoubtedly need to retool against increasingly sophisticated modes of cheating, whether these are done at the precincts, at the canvassing boards or, worse, in higher circles only wiretapping experts can penetrate.

After all, it still took political insiders, intelligence operators, and partisan figures—not whistle-blowers from the ranks of poll watchers—to pry the Garci scandal wide open in June 2005, more than a year after the May 2004 presidential elections.

Wiretapped conversations purportedly between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano were made public, indicating she may have stolen the 2004 presidential election. The President and Garcillano have denied any wrongdoing.

1st time: Lawyers as poll watchers

Lente, the new group joining the old watchdogs like Namfrel and the PPCRV (Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting), believes that adding lawyers, paralegals and law students to the army of poll watchers could significantly deter any schemes to manipulate the election results.

That army includes half a million volunteers called to action by the Catholic Church in the country.

"Whatever they may be planning out there, we will be waiting when they start to implement it on the ground," said Medina. "With our presence, they better come up with other ideas."

Medina,.a law professor who is also executive director of the Ateneo Human Rights Center, said the coming elections would mark the first time lawyers would form part of the poll-watching "structure."

In previous elections, lawyers figured in the canvassing mainly as private attorneys for the competing politicians. This time, Medina said, there will be Lente members working simultaneously with Namfrel or PPCRV volunteers, the latter being mostly laypersons not versed in the legal technicalities of a poll canvass.

Lente, which aims to deploy at least 9,600 lawyers, paralegals or law students nationwide, can be most useful in applying the "lessons" poll watchers have learned from the "Garci" episode, he said.

Numerical tricks

Just what are those numerical tricks poll watchers are trained to spot when examining ERs and COCs? Alvia gave actual samples that Namfrel has culled from past elections:

- The figure "llll-ll" got written as "five two" instead of "seven." This was spotted in Marikina in 1998.
- The numeral "19" got written as "ninety." It happened in Manila in the 2001 polls.
- With just two strokes of a pen, "1,382" in the municipal COC became "4,382" in the provincial COC; Zamboanga del Norte, 2001.
- "2,599" grew almost five-fold and became "12,599," while "13,784" morphed into "28,784." This was documented in two towns in Pangasinan in 1995. Twenty-two other towns in that province produced a total of 112,994 "extra" votes.
- And in the 2004 elections, this was encountered in Tawi-Tawi: With already 89 percent of the votes canvassed in the Namfrel Quick Count, Presidential Candidate A had garnered only 15,925 votes against Candidate B's 58,292 votes. B was thus enjoying an insurmountable lead of 42,367 votes.

But after the remaining 11 percent or 9,553 votes were canvassed, the official tally showed B getting a total of over 49,803 votes over A's 33,634 votes. B still won in the province, yes, but by a much narrower margin.

This was because about 31,000 votes cast for B went instead to A, Alvia said. Similar occurrences were also observed in seven other provinces in Mindanao, wherein a total of 598,560 "B" votes got moved to the "A" column.

Known forms of cheating

There are forms of cheating which poll watchers can easily detect, he said, such as vote-buying, the use of "flying voters," ballot-box switching, and various tactics to sow confusion, delay the process, or discourage people from trooping to the poll booths.

But beyond the precincts, there would be hazy areas way outside their radar. Alvia wondered: What if candidates themselves connive to engage in dagdag-bawas? A winning senatorial candidate with a safe lead willing to donate some of his votes to a party mate so the latter can make it to the Magic 12?

"Of course, we cannot—and will not—monitor phone calls. That's not part of our mandate," said former Ambassador Henrietta de Villa, PPCRV national chair.

As the accredited citizen arm of the Comelec, the Church-based group aims to deploy half-a-million volunteers or at least two per precinct nationwide. Established in 1992, it will be monitoring its 16th elections this May 14.

"But we can't be frustrated. What we are doing is living a part of our (Catholic) faith. Our mere presence is about restoring credibility to our elections, otherwise more and more will just shy away from them," De Villa said.

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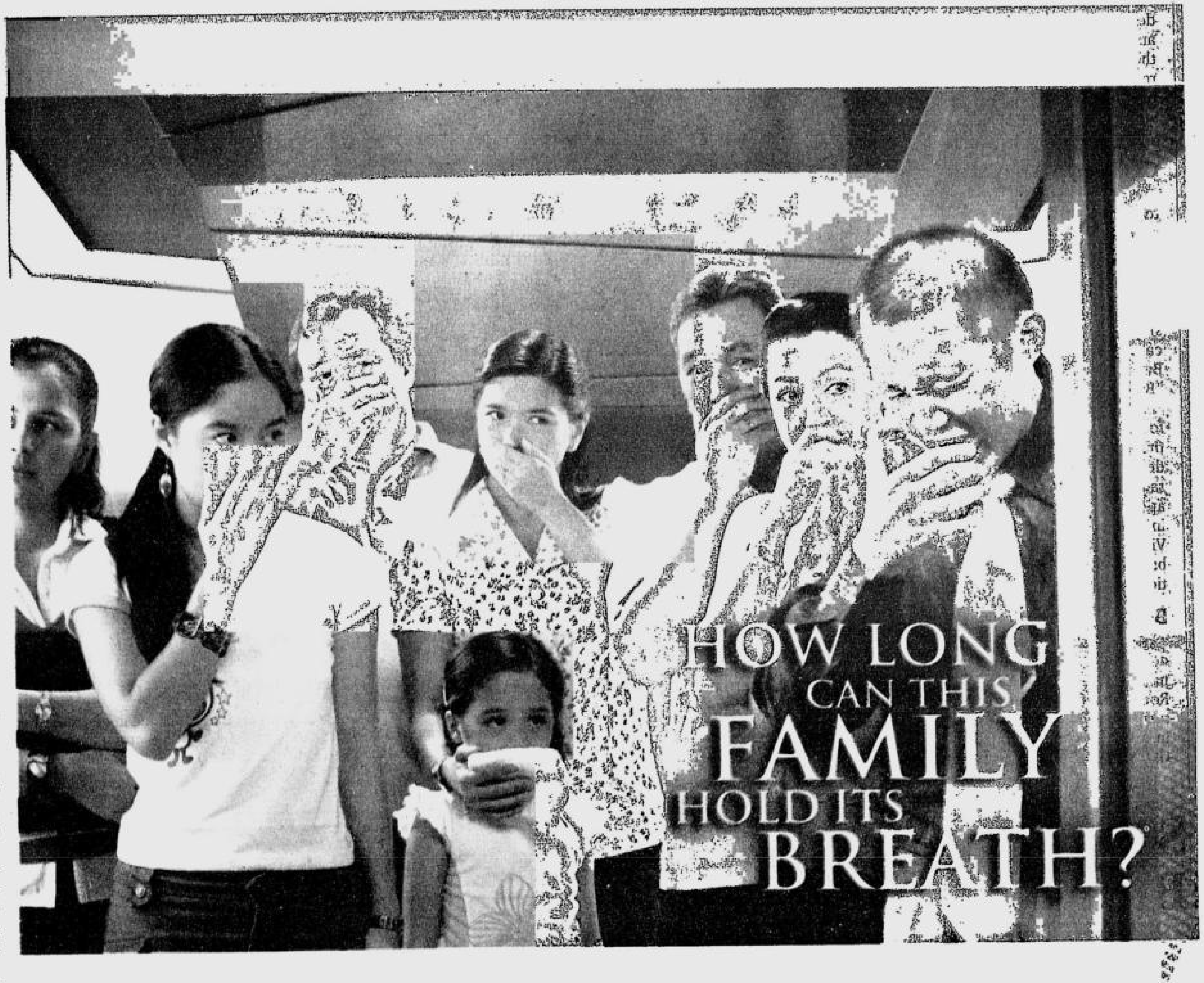
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2. http://www.birdavianflu.com/birdfluairbornetransmission.htm
3. http://www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm

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BUONG PAMILYA MAGPABAKUNA

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC AND INVESTORS OF THE HAMILO COAST PROJECT OF SM INVESTMENTS CORPORATION

DURING THE MARCH 22, 2007 LAUNCHING OF THE HAMILO COAST PROJECT LOCATED AT HACIENDA LOOC, NASUGBU BATANGAS, SM INVESTMENTS CORPORATION (SMIC) ANNOUNCED THAT:

1. THE PROPERTIES IN PHASE I OF THE HAMILO COAST PROJECT ARE NOT COVERED BY ADVERSE CLAIMS.

2. THE ADVERSE CLAIMS ANNOTATED BY CARMONA REALTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OVER SOME OF THE PROPERTIES COVERED BY THE HAMILO COAST PROJECT HAVE ALREADY LAPSED AND ARE NOT VALID AND SUBSISTING.

THESE STATEMENTS ARE FALSE.

THE TRUTH IS THAT:

1. TCT NO. 108973 AND TCT NO. 108974 ISSUED BY THE REGISTRY OF DEEDS OF NASUGBU, BATANGAS, WHICH FORM PART OF PHASE I OF THE HAMILO COAST PROJECT, ARE COVERED BY ADVERSE CLAIMS.

2. THE ADVERSE CLAIMS ANNOTATED BY CARMONA REALTY AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION ON 2,700 HECTARES OUT OF THE 5,800 HECTARES COVERED BY THE HAMILO COAST PROJECT AROSE FROM THE FAILURE AND REFUSAL OF SM INVESTMENTS CORPORATION, MANILA SOUTHCOAST DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (MSDC) AND THEIR AFFILIATE COMPANIES TO FULLY PAY THE DISTURBANCE COMPENSATION OF THE FARMERS WHO HELD THE CERTIFICATES OF LAND OWNERSHIP (CLOA'S) OVER SAID PROPERTIES, AS WELL AS MSDC'S FAILURE AND REFUSAL TO COMPLY WITH ITS CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS. THE ISSUANCE OF NEW TITLES TO MSDC, AN SMIC AFFILIATE, IS IRREGULAR AND IMPROPER SINCE SEVERAL OF THESE FARMERS WHO WERE THE REGISTERED OWNERS OF AT LEAST 2,000 HECTARES COVERED BY THE HAMILO COAST PROJECT HAVE NOT YET SURRENDERED THEIR OWNER'S DUPLICATE CERTIFICATES OF TITLES (CLOA'S) TO THE REGISTRY OF DEEDS BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT YET BEEN FULLY PAID THEIR DISTURBANCE COMPENSATION, AS REQUIRED BY LAW AND STATED IN THE MARCH 10, 1998 COURT ORDER IN DARAB CASE NO. IV-Ba-3468.

3. THE ADVERSE CLAIMS ANNOTATED BY CARMONA REALTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION ON AT LEAST 11 TITLES WHICH FORM PART OF THE 5,800 HECTARE HAMILO COAST PROJECT REMAIN VALID AND SUBSISTING AND HAVE NOT YET BEEN CANCELLED IN COURT. IN THE CASE OF SAJONAS V. CA (258 SCRA 79) AND DIAZ-DUARTE VS. ONG (298 SCRA 388), THE SUPREME COURT RULED THAT A NOTICE OF ADVERSE CLAIM REMAINS VALID AND SUBSISTING EVEN AFTER THE LAPSE OF THE 30-DAY PERIOD AND CONTINUES AS A LIEN UPON THE PROPERTY UNTIL SUCH TIME THAT IT IS CANCELLED BY A COURT ORDER.

THE PUBLIC AND PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS ARE, THEREFORE, ADVISED TO TAKE THE PROPER STEPS TO ASCERTAIN AND VERIFY THAT THE PROPERTIES IN THE HAMILO COAST PROJECT THAT THEY WILL BE PURCHASING FROM SM INVESTMENTS CORPORATION OR ANY OF ITS AFFILIATES, PARTNERS AND AGENTS ARE NOT PART OF THE 2,700 HECTARES WHICH ARE COVERED BY SAID ADVERSE CLAIMS.

MAY 9, 2007, MAKATI CITY.

ONGKIKO KALAW MANHIT & ACORDA LAW OFFICES
Counsel of Carmona Realty & Development Corporation
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NOTICE FROM THE LEGITIMATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF PHILCOMSAT HOLDINGS CORPORATION

The Court of Appeals has issued a TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER, enjoining and prohibiting the implementation of the Decision rendered by the Regional Trial Court of Makati City, Branch 138, and all other allied processes, including the Order dated April 12, 2007 and Writ of Execution, in the case filed by Victor Africa against the members of the PHC Nomelec constituted in 2004. However, certain parties and purported members of the group of Victor Africa and Erlinda I. Bildner, have refused to respect, recognized and comply with TRO issued by the Court of Appeals. They constituted their own "PHC board" and attempted to mislead the stockholders, banks and clients PHC, and the general public.

Legal issues have already been brought before the proper forum, and all claims of the parties are properly litigated before the court, not through alleged notices of the Africa-led group. In the meantime, the TRO issued by the Court of Appeals must be respected and complied with, on pain of contempt not only of the Court of Appeals but also of the Sandiganbayan, among other sanctions.

Please be advised that Philcomsat Holdings Corporation shall recognized and honor only those transactions authorized by its legitimate Board of Directors and Officers led by Acting Chairman-Director Enrique L. Locsin, Vice President-Director Philip G. Brodett, Corporate Secretary Roberto V. San Jose, Assistant Corporate Secretary Delfin P. Angcao, AVP Johnny Tan, the duly designated agents representatives of the above-named, and those made through their counsel, Sen. Rene A.V. Saguisag.

Any transaction made by or on behalf of Victor Africa, Erlinda I. Bildner, or any other member of their group, their agents, representatives, and lawyers, are contrary to the TRO of the Court of Appeals and shall not be honored by PHC.

We trust that those concerned shall be guided accordingly and follow the rule of law.

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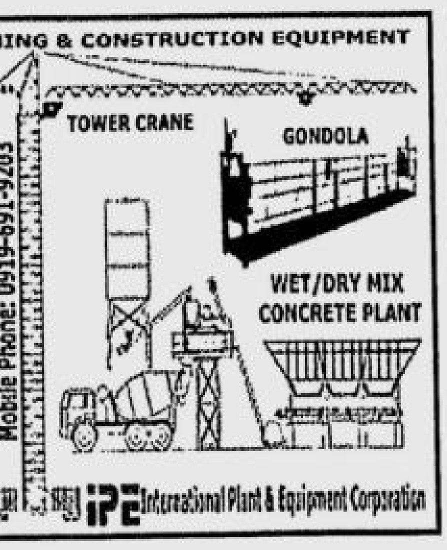

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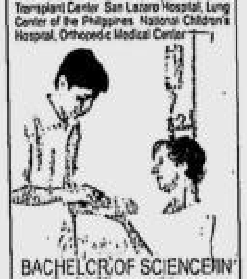

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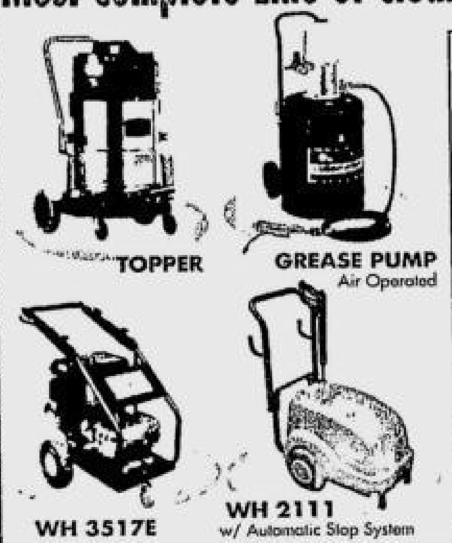

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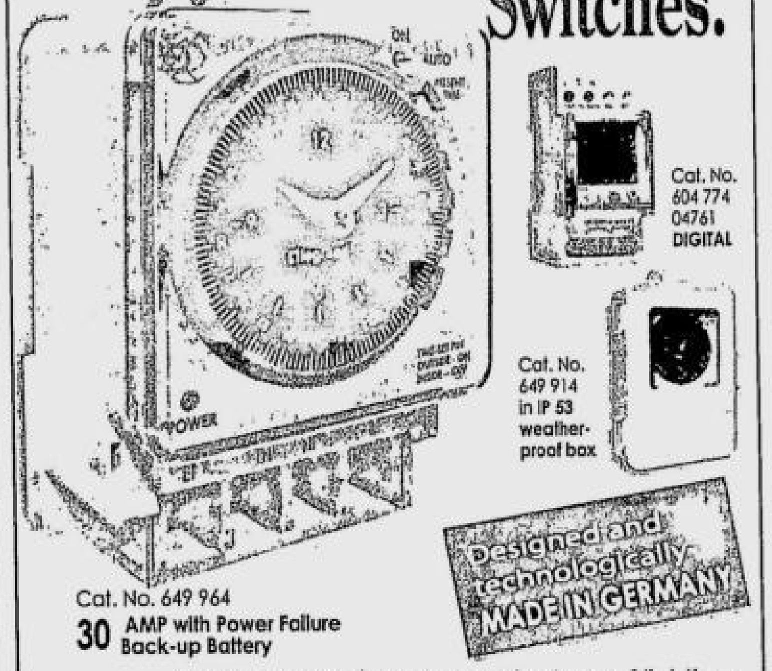

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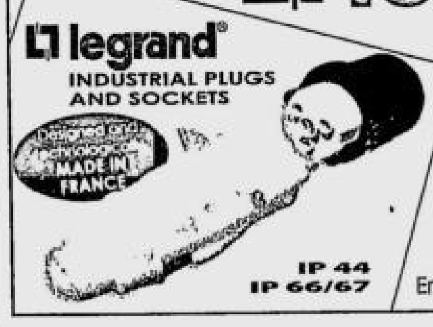

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IPO asked to revoke hypertension drug's patent

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A STATE-OWNED PHILIPPINE company yesterday urged regulators to cancel the patent held by pharmaceutical giant Pfizer on a popular anti-hypertension drug Norvasc.

Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC) wants the Intellectual Property Office to cancel the US-based company's exclusive patents on amlodipine besylate, known as Norvasc, so Filipino pharmaceutical firms can import or produce cheaper alternatives.

In a 20-page petition, the PITC argued that the patent for Norvasc was "neither new and novel nor non-inventive... and was contrary to public order and morality."

The concerned patent—PH Patent No. 24348—would expire on June 12, but PITC executive vice president Teddie Elson E. Rivera said it should not have been granted in the first place.

"PITC believes that with this petition, local pharmaceutical firms would be able to manufacture generic equivalents of Norvasc at much more affordable prices," Rivera said.

He said that if the IPO acted favorably on its petition, it would pave the way for similar cases to be pursued.

Pfizer's local patent (issued 1990) is based on one granted in the United Kingdom in 1986, which was also the basis of a US patent, issued 1989.

A Norvasc tablet costs about one dollar in the Philippines but only some 10 cents in India, PITC said on its web site. *With a report from AFP*

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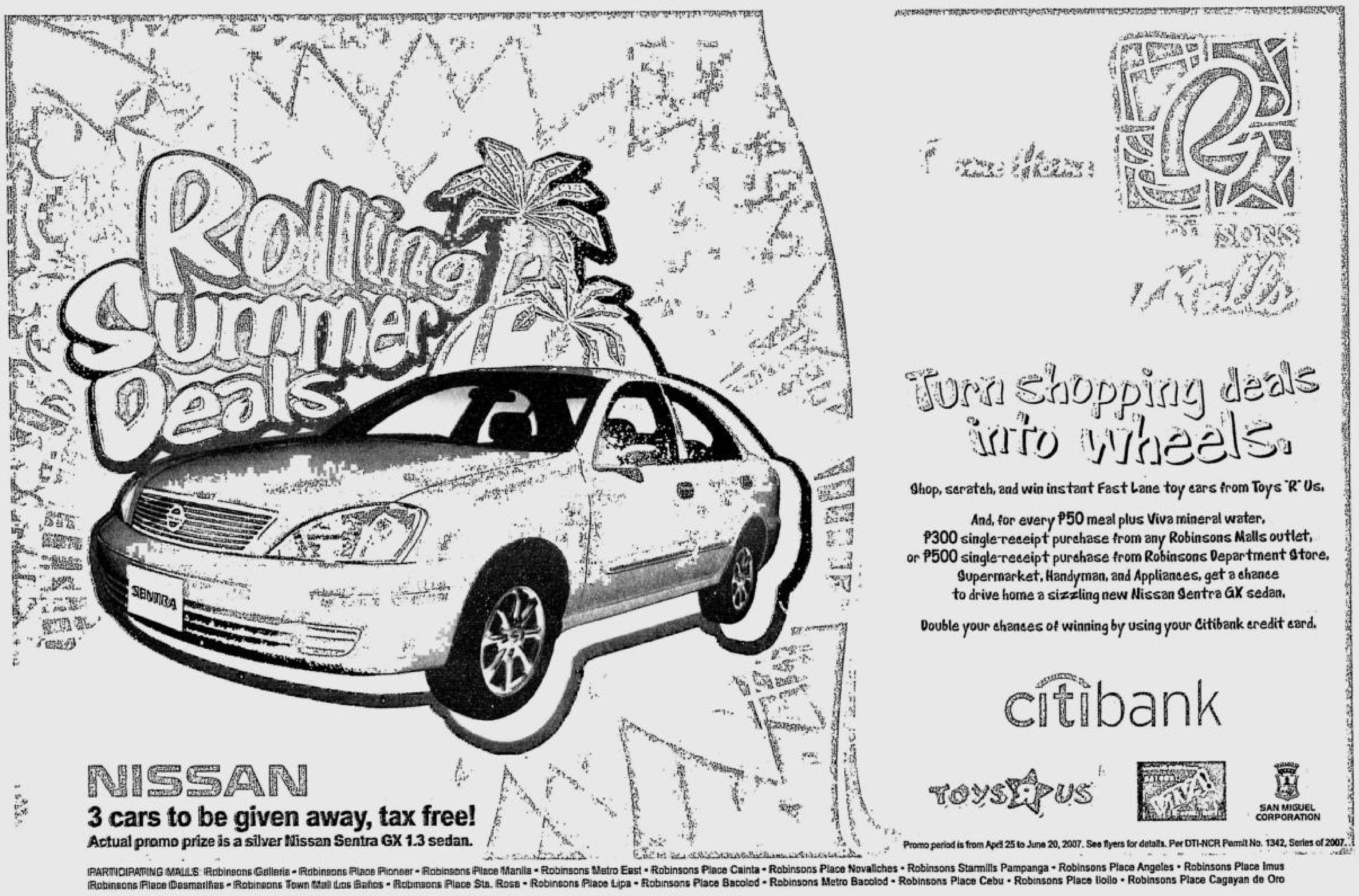

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US visa backlog puts Asian lives on hold

ASIAN IMMIGRANTS IN OHIO SAY VISA backlogs are keeping families split up and that the problem is not getting enough attention in the national debate over immigration policy.

"They're worried a new law will not consider people like them," said Margaret Wong, an immigration lawyer with many Asian clients. "They're worried it will only cover Latinos and not Asians."

Marcela Gallardo was 52 in 1995, a newly sworn-in American citizen, when she applied to have her children join her from the Philippines. Twelve years later, she is still waiting for visas for them.

"It's very hard," said Gallardo, who has been filling out forms, paying filing fees and praying. "I want to be with my kids, too. I'm getting old now, and I need them here."

As a naturalized US citizen, Gallardo is entitled to bring over her children. But her family must wait in line for visas that are especially scarce for the Philippines, India and China.

Path for millions

Much of the debate over immigration policy in Washington focuses on what steps, if any, should be taken to open a path for millions of illegal immigrants to eventually become US citizens. Most of the illegal immigrants are from Mexico or other Latin American countries who can walk across the border.

But illegal immigration is a much more daunting and costly option for immigrants from India, China and the Pacific Rim who must travel thousands of miles to reach a Midwestern state like Ohio.

"For the Asian community, there's just no way your sibling from Manila is going to illegally immigrate here," said Rob Paral, a research fellow with the American Immigration Law Foundation. "The only way is legal immigration. And there's just a long line for those folks."

Gurcharan Singh and his wife came legally from India in 1997, nearly 15 years after they had applied for immigrant visas. The couple brought their youngest son, but left behind their eldest son. He had turned 21 while the family awaited its visas, so he could not accompany his parents. Rather, he had to petition to immigrate as an adult child.

10-year wait

The wait for such a visa is more than 10 years.

Singh, a college-educated factory worker, sat beside his wife in a small apartment bedecked with icons of their Sikh faith.

"We want my son to come here so the whole family is together," he said, as his wife began to cry.

The United States accepts a limited number of immigrants each year. The quotas are designed to spread the coveted visas around the globe.

People from India, China, Mexico and the Philippines face the longest waits because demand there is so high.

"People's lives are on hold waiting for visas," said Jayashree Bidari, an immigration lawyer and chairwoman of the Ohio chapter of the South Asian Bar Association.

Her group wants any comprehensive immigration reform plan to support family reunification. It is pushing for visa quotas to be raised and made flexible to lessen the long waits.

Most of this debate never reaches Gallardo. A US Marine met and married Gallardo's daughter in the Philippines and brought her home to Cleveland. Gallardo followed in 1990 to help care for four grandchildren.

Her small home is dotted with photos of children and grandchildren still in Manila, where good jobs are scarce and leaving is common, she said.

Gallardo's dining room table is piled with forms and correspondence from the federal government. Some paperwork was lost, a recent letter informs her, and another affidavit is required. So is another $360 (euro265) filing fee.

"I suffer. I cry," she said. "Because how many more years do I have to be with them here?" *AP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, May 9, 2007
5th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 15:1-6
Gospel: John 15:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine and my Father is the vinegrower. If any of my branches doesn't bear fruit, he breaks it off; and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, that it may bear even more fruit.

"You are already made clean by the word I have spoken to you; live in me as I live in you. The branch cannot bear fruit by itself but has to remain part of the vine; so neither can you if you don't remain in me.

"I am the vine and you are the branches. As long as you remain in me and I in you, you bear much fruit; but apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not remain in me is thrown away as they do with branches and they wither. Then they are gathered and thrown into the fire and burned.

"If you remain in me and my words in you, you may ask whatever you want and it will be given to you. My Father is glorified when you bear much fruit: it is then that you become my disciples."

Commentary

Controversy and dissension arise because some people want to enforce Jewish law/custom on the new believers. Paul and Barnabas begin the journey back to Jerusalem, stopping along the way to tell the churches what has happened and all that has been accomplished. And immediately in Jerusalem they are interrupted with some insisting that the new converts be circumcised according to Mosaic law. The apostles and elders convene to look into the issue. Since the beginning the Church has had to deal with people who insist on their version of life that is not found in anything that Jesus ever did or said. But the Church must look at these issues and decide with the power of the Spirit what is true to Jesus' Word.

Jesus tells his disciples that we must be pruned and all the barren branches cut away so that the fruit can grow. We live in the vine that belongs to the Father, the vinegrower, and we can only bear fruit if we live in God. Apart from God, we are withered and lifeless, without fruit. In bearing fruit we glorify God and it is in the fruit of our works that we learn what is of God and what is simply human beings' agenda.

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EDITORIAL

ON APRIL 28, JONAS BURGOS DISAPPEARED. AN agriculture graduate of Benguet State University, the son of the late Malaya publisher Jose Burgos had spent the day doing organic farming training in San Miguel, Bulacan. The farmers he had been helping were members of Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Bulacan (AMB), a chapter of the militant peasant organization Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP).

Burgos was expected home that evening, for a family gathering in their Tandang Sora home. Reports have it that a group of four to eight armed men abducted Burgos from the Ever Gotesco Mall and took him to a waiting red Toyota Revo. The abduction reportedly took place between 1:15 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.

A security guard of a restaurant was one of the witnesses. The guard told investigators the kidnappers introduced themselves as policemen. The witness claimed the armed men asked the people inside the restaurant to calm down.

Burgos' family attempted to send text messages the whole night. They didn't receive an answer from Jonas until the following day at 10:46 a.m. when they got a message saying, "*Sensya na, ligo lang* (I'm sorry, was just taking a bath)."

More messages were sent, and the exchange proved confusing. The Burgos family called Jonas up, but his answers, they say, were unclear and he sounded like someone who had been drugged. His phone stopped ringing at 6 p.m. on Sunday. He has not been heard from since.

"We appeal to the hearts and conscience of those who know about my son's whereabouts to let us know about his condition," his mother Edith said in a public message. "If they think he has done anything, we ask them to give the family a chance to defend Jonas."

The Armed Forces of the Philippines has been accused by some groups of being behind the abduction. Naturally, the AFP vehemently denies it. The police have launched an investigation, but it hasn't progressed very far, although there is one promising lead. The license plate (TAB-194) on the vehicle reportedly used in the abduction was traced to a certain Mauro Mudlong, the registered owner. Mudlong told the police his vehicle was not a Toyota Revo, but a 1991 model Isuzu utility van. And that his vehicle had been impounded on June 24, 2006 by the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources. A vehicle matching the description of the one actually used in the abduction was spotted in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

Those are in the leads in this case: a vehicle, with a license plate from another vehicle impounded by the government last year, spotted in Bulacan. And that is where this latest incident of an abduction with political overtones stands.

We add our voice to that of the Burgos family in calling for Jonas' captors to set him free. Jonas' brother, Jose Luis, has made this appeal: "We are calling to citizens of good hearts, please help our family to locate Jay-jay. If you have any little details of Jay-jay's whereabouts, the posters have details where you can contact us and we will assure you of confidentiality so as not to jeopardize your security as well."

But time may be running out. There is a rule of thumb in such cases—a grim one. The person who disappears has to resurface within a week of the disappearance, otherwise the chances of that person being seen alive again gets progressively remote. The KMP is one of many organizations that have been targeted by the administration as "communist fronts," and Burgos is just one of many members of these groups who have disappeared under extremely suspicious circumstances.

The Burgos family has been careful to avoid assigning blame, focusing instead on appealing to the authorities and the public to find Jonas. But his disappearance can't be separated from similar disappearances. His fate is tied to two others who were with him, and were abducted with him; and the claims and counter-claims of critics of the military and the AFP comes at a time when soldiers and the top brass are poised to be at the center of controversies involving their conduct in the coming elections.

Individually, there are policeman and military men who have shown sympathy for Jonas. But institutionally, civilian and military authorities alike have been sluggish in their response, and more interested in dodging responsibility than in recognizing that this is yet another black mark on the country's ability to uphold human rights.

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readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph • Tel. No. 897-8808, Loc. 342

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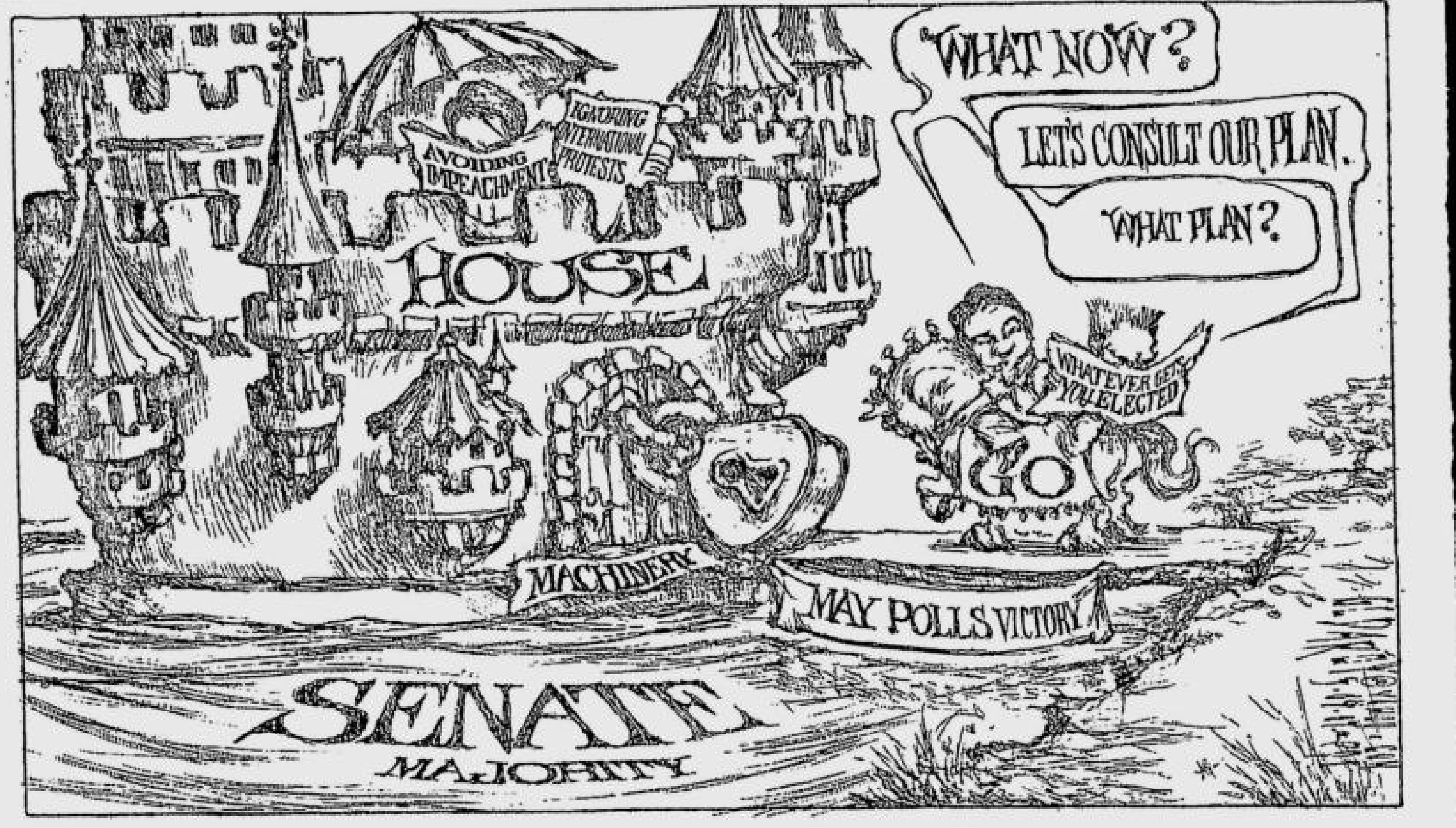

A very stupid mistake by the administration

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHO IS RIGHT AND WHO IS WRONG IN THE Binay suspension controversy in Makati?

He had it coming, say critics of Mayor Jejomar Binay. From 1999 to 2001, the city government under Binay did not remit to the Bureau of Internal Revenue from P600 million to P700 million in withholding taxes deducted from the salaries of 8,000 government employees. Under the law, the Bureau of Internal Revenue has the power to garnish the bank deposits of the city government to pay for the taxes. By admitting that the city paid to the BIR P200 million in a compromise settlement, Binay also admitted that the city owes the BIR a huge amount. However, he said the freeze order would paralyze the operations of City Hall. And that he was denied due process.

Critics ask two questions: 1. If withholding taxes were taken from the salaries of employees and not remitted, where did the money go? 2. If the city government itself is negligent in remitting taxes, what more can we expect from the big corporations that hold office in Makati's Central Business District? Isn't this what we want the BIR to do: to be strict in collecting taxes from those who can afford it?

On the other hand, Binay was being suspended not for the unremitted taxes but for a graft case filed by a political rival, Oscar Ibay, claiming that the mayor has ghost employees on the city payroll. This is the same accusation filed by another political rival, Bobby Brillante, for which the Office of Ombudsman tried to suspend Binay six months ago but was stopped by the people and the courts.

Even assuming that the suspension is justified, the timing was terrible. It was a very stupid move.

GO senatorial candidate Loren Legarda summed up what the general public feels: "The attempt to suspend Mayor Binay as the election period is drawing to a close is a glaring example of political harassment. Worse, the government tried to do it after office hours and during a Friday at that. But I am confident that Mayor Binay can overcome this latest attempt to derail his reelection bid. Justice will prevail and I believe this incident will even strengthen the resolve of Mayor Binay's constituents to deliver him a landslide victory come May 14."

Those behind it probably thought they were being smart when they were really very stupid. And ironically the victim of the fallout is the administration's own candidate, Sen. Lito Lapid. The people of Makati, including those who don't like Binay very much, cannot help but be angry at this blatant use of power to harass a political enemy. That would result in more votes for Binay and fewer votes for Lapid.

On whose side is Malacañang anyway? That stupid move only helped Binay.

Malacañang realized, too late, that it made a mistake and retreated, deferring the suspension until after the elections. President Macapagal-Arroyo tried to distance herself from the fiasco by having the Department of Interior and Local Government say that she had not been informed of the suspension order.

Do you believe that? Do you think Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno would do a risky thing like that without getting the approval of Malacañang? The truth is more likely that the order came from Malacañang and Puno was just implementing it.

* * *

The best piece of news I have heard so far this week is the report that Manny Pacquiao is trailing Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio two votes to one in a survey in South Cotabato. The survey showed Darlene getting 66 percent of the votes while Pacman has only 33 percent. That proves that South Cotabato folk are intelligent voters after all.

The Darlene versus Manny rivalry has quickly become a beauty-and-the beast contest with a brute of a boxer trying to beat up a little wisp of a girl. In such a contest, where do you think the sympathy of the people would be?

Manny's boxing victories have made him popular with Filipinos and this have gone to his head. He thinks he is smart but he is really just *uto-uto*. Malacañang made *bola* with him that his popularity would land him a seat in Congress, a job for which he is not qualified in the first place. In reality, the politicians just want to use him for their own selfish motives: he could be more vote against the impeachment of GMA. But ironically, this champion boxer would suffer his first defeat in the hands of a little woman. What a happy story: the Pacman beast knocked out by Little Red Riding Hood in the political arena.

For a neophyte politician, Pacquiao has quickly acquired the bad habits of *trapos*. Early in the campaign, Pacman was caught distributing insurance cards, an act prohibited by the Omnibus Election Code because it is a form of vote-buying, and for which he should be disqualified. Then taking a cue from the gimmicks of sportswriters, Pacquiao concocted a cheap propaganda gimmick of his own. He said that there is an "assassination plot" against him. He even said in a TV interview that the man hired to kill him was paid P20 million.

A big lie, said the police. A check with the Maritime Command where the report was supposed to have come from showed that the plot didn't exist. No wonder he ran to the media with the story instead of to the police.

Pacquiao, by the way, is the only candidate in the country allowed by the Commission on Elections to have at least 20 guns for his bodyguards. And yet he is afraid of a non-existent slay attempt?

Is this the brave ring gladiator Filipinos admire?

Footnote to a farce

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I GOT ASKED BY A REPORTER LAST WEEK IF Mike Arroyo's decision to drop the charges against 46 journalists was something to be glad about in light of that day being Press Freedom Day.

My answer was: Why on earth should anyone be thankful for something like that? Why on earth should we see that as a boon to press freedom? Press freedom is not something we owe to him. It is not his to give or take, proffer or withdraw, as he pleases. Press freedom is a right. It is something to be enjoyed and exercised as a matter of course. It is not a gift that may be freely bestowed by the First Gentleman or his wife, especially since neither one of them has any rightful claim to the positions they occupy. It is part of the condition of our being as citizens who live in a democracy. Or who like to think we do.

Arroyo's own justification for doing it, according to his lawyer, is that he is grateful for the miracle of life granted him by heaven and would like to improve the quality of it. Not least by showing depths of generosity hitherto unassociated with him, or to share his providential bounty with others.

That is all very well, though as Ellen Tordesillas pointed out on TV last week, if he were truly determined to show boundless gratefulness to Providence for a new lease on life and make amends, Arroyo could always extend his newfound generosity to not persecuting Alan Peter Cayetano. To this day, Cayetano finds himself the object of legal and political harassment. But such are the surreal ironies of this magic-realist country Cayetano should probably be thanking the First Gentleman for the harassment and begging him to not stop it. It has given him free and massively persuasive advertisement, catapulting him to the top of the senatorial heap, or near it.

While at this, one might add to Tordesillas' proposal that the reborn Arroyo also agree to open his book of deposits, apart from his book of life, to public scrutiny. That is what Cayetano has been demanding all this time: a blanket waiver. That was what Ping Lacson readily agreed to when he was accused of stashing deposits in the United States—and he did so while in the pink of health. If those deposits do not exist, then Cayetano will only run into a blank wall, which should be sufficient punishment for him. If those deposits do exist, they may be hidden from Cayetano and Juan de la Cruz, but they will not be hidden from God.

More than this, it's all very well that the First Gentleman is parading a change of, well, heart before the world, but that is a matter for God and his conscience. That is not a matter for Juan de la Cruz and press freedom. His libel suits against 46 journalists constitute an attack on press freedom. It is not for him to show generosity or, heaven forbid, graciousness by dropping the charges against them. One is tempted to say it is for the journalists to do so by dropping their countersuit against him. But in fact it is not for the journalists to do so either: The transgression is not just against them, it is against the citizens. The issue is bigger than them.

Ironically, it was Arroyo's camp which completely refuted his justification for his libel suits, which was that he was a private person and not public figure. That was while he lay in a bed at St. Luke's awaiting his doctors' and heaven's verdict. His friends and allies came out flush with praise for him, specifically highlighting how vital he was for his spouse and her government. One congressman even went on to say he was especially important in sandpapering and/or cementing the relations between his wife and the generals. He was her conduit, or special ambassador, to them. Without him, they would not be so tractable.

If Arroyo had decided to push through with his suit, that alone would have trashed it. He isn't-or wasn't-just a private person, he is-or was-a public figure.

A couple of weeks ago, Jake Macasaet called me up to say that if Arroyo dropped the charges against them, he personally would continue with his own suit against Arroyo even if the plaintiffs in the class suit decided not to. He was especially incensed by the suggestion that Arroyo was doing him a favor by letting bygones be bygones. Arroyo was the one who owed him and not the other way around, Jake fumed (and when Jake fumes in his raspy voice, he leaves no doubt he is fuming). He would get what was owed him, monetarily and morally, while letting Arroyo experience some of the mental anguish he had caused him.

I told Jake I sympathized with him completely. I am one of the plaintiffs of the class suit notwithstanding that I am not one of the accused, and that was my position too. The reason I am one of the plaintiffs is that I believe this case goes beyond the egos of the parties concerned to the very core of press freedom, or this case goes beyond the interests of the accused to that of the nation itself. It's not just the 46 journalists Arroyo has put on the dock, he has done so all of journalism. I am one of the plaintiffs because I think it's time we, the citizens, fought back to protect a right as vital as air itself.

Like murder and mayhem, harassment via libel suits is part of the culture of impunity. And like the culture of impunity, it is a most contagious disease. It is airborne and spreads like a plague upon release. Look at how libel suits are rioting today. You now even have Mega-Pacific, the one company that screwed computerized elections having the gall to try to send the whistle-blower, Gus Lagman, to jail via that route. Enough already.

Do unto the overbearing what they do unto us. They want to file libel charges against us, let us file charges right back at them. See which one sticks.

Close to flashpoint

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE DEFERMENT OF THE SUSPENSION OF Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay was clearly a tactical retreat executed by the Arroyo administration to escape the incendiary fallout of the suspension on Team Unity candidates in the May election, not a magnanimous act "in the spirit of fair play," as Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno would like the people to believe.

Far more important to consider is that the suspension itself demonstrated the dangerous brinkmanship being played by the administration, which is pushing the election closer to the edge of violent confrontation with the provocative acts it is employing in the effort to win the polls at all cost. For now, the deferment has narrowly averted a showdown on the streets of Makati between Binay partisans and the government's security forces. The escalation is not yet the last notch to a flashpoint. It is still being cranked up.

The administration has pulled all stops to the deployment of all its advantages of incumbency to influence the election's outcome, including crippling the campaign of opposition candidates through suspension orders and suddenly rediscovered long-pending criminal cases, the release of pork-barrel funds to the rural electorates, and the overt intimidation by units of the Armed Forces of leftist candidates in Central Luzon (notably in Nueva Ecija) as well as party-list nominees for Congress.

When Puno talks about fair play, he affronts public decency. This person, who is reputed to be the architect of the *dagdag-bawas* method of cheating in recent elections, should be the last to claim fairness. The 2007 has already been effectively rigged in structural terms.

Two constitutional independent institutions charged with the responsibility of conducting fair and honest elections and an impartial administration of justice—the Commission on Elections and the Office of the Ombudsman, respectively—have shown, through a series of decisions over the past few months, a partisanship that has eroded public trust in their independence. The military and the police, which have been called in to control politically-related violence (which has been on the rise) and ensure a free election, have not demonstrated an impartiality that inspires public confidence. The Department of Justice, under Secretary Raul Gonzalez, has rapidly deteriorated into an attack dog of the administration against its political opponents.

The 2007 election easily stands out as an election that has been set up for rigging. Few elections in recent memory have seen state institutions, designed to protect a democratic society, being lined up as instruments to ensure the political survival of an administration and to rig the political environment.

When Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez signed on May 3 the order directing the DILG to serve the suspension order on Binay, she said the order was "immediately executory" and "shall not be interrupted within the (six-month) period prescribed." The May 3 order revived a preventive suspension issued by the Ombudsman in October on the strength of a complaint laid by a political opponent of Binay and alleging that the mayor had padded the city payroll with "ghost employees." When reminded that the new order was issued in the midst of the election in which Binay is running for reelection, Gutierrez had the gumption to say, "Evidence, not politics, dictates our actions. Nothing more, nothing less."

This is the same official who last Jan. 15 directed Puno to "immediately implement" all suspension and dismissal orders on local officials—mainly opposition politicians—facing administrative charges. On the strength of this order, the police did not waste time in sending a task force of more than 100 armed men to storm the Iloilo Provincial Capitol to evict Gov. Niel Tupas. A court order stayed the eviction.

The ombudsman's action mirrored the hangman's mentality of state institutions to protect the political interests of the administration. Their actions reflect the slash-and-burn strategy of winning the election.

The suspension order did more harm to the administration than cripple Binay's campaign. Some Team Unity senatorial candidates warned the administration of the public backlash that threatened to pull them down and helped the opposition's chances of sweeping the Senate election. This forced the administration to retreat.

The temptation is strong for the administration, blinded by hubris, to continue to test the limit of public outrage with a fresh round of provocative actions to bring the tensions close to flash point. It does not want for trigger men to do this. This brinkmanship is only one small step away from the final solution: actual cheating in the election. The infrastructure for election rigging has already been put now in place. Cheating becomes a formality, given the predisposition revealed in the presidential intervention during the canvass of the 2004 election as revealed by her improper telephone conversations with Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

A recent Social Weather Stations survey showed that 40 percent of voters think the President "will cheat in the May 2007 elections for her candidates to win." That survey is a good measure of the public mood of concern over the integrity of the election and distrust over the impartiality of the Comelec. It is a warning that the administration should never tamper in any way with the election. The element for a spontaneous explosion exists. It takes only a spark, like blatant cheating, to ignite a political upheaval more devastating than Edsa I.

A missionary's murder

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WEEKS BEFORE AMERICAN PEACE CORPS VOLunteer Julia Campbell was set upon on a dark mountain path in Banaue, another foreigner, Indonesian missionary Fr. Francis Madhu, SVD, was killed in Sitio Bawak, Barangay Mabongtot, Lubuagan, Kalinga.

It took only a few days, in the blazing heat of media attention and diplomatic pressure, for law-enforcement officials to locate the suspect in the Campbell killing and extract a confession. Although, given the implausibility of the scenario painted by Juan Duntugan, many folks believe and have said so in public that Duntugan could simply be a "fall guy" for the real assailants.

In the meantime, very little has happened in the Madhu case. There was no lack of eye-witnesses who identified and named the murderer and his accomplices. And reports say the suspects have been seen wandering about, causing the witnesses who came forward to fear for their lives.

Fr. Gerry Gudmalin, SVD, parish priest of Lubuagan and therefore Father Francis' immediate superior and partner in pastoral work in the area, writes that "we are living here in fear knowing that the suspects are just roaming around their village. It's good that witnesses gave their statements but threats (to) their lives may come once the suspects learn that they gave and signed their statements."

Most everyone in Lubuagan knows who the suspects are, but the police have yet to move against them. Father Gerry says the local police don't know (or say they don't know) what the suspects look like, and that not a single picture of them could be found. This lends credence to speculation that the families of the suspects have been protecting them, "as it has been the practice here," writes Father Gerry.

* * *

THERE are many parallels between the Campbell and Madhu cases.

There is, for one, the similarity in reasons for their being here. Campbell was a freelance journalist who felt a certain "emptiness" in her life and sought to fill it with service to the world's poor, particularly to schoolchildren in Sorsogon and college students in Legaspi. Father Francis, who was 31 when he was gunned down, hailed from the province of Flores in Indonesia and was ordained as a member of the Society of the Divine Word in 2004. His first missionary assignment was to the Philippine Northern Province, and after undergoing a language course in English and Ilocano, he was installed in 2005 as co-pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Lubuagan.

The SVD congregation is populated by priests and brothers from all parts of the world, and today Indonesians make up the biggest number of SVD missionaries. Although theoretically still "mission territory," Indonesia, being the world's most populous Muslim nation, its harvest of vocations, at least for the SVD family, has been so rich, Indonesian missionaries have been increasingly fielded abroad. Father Francis, described by those who knew him as "shy, quiet and retiring," was thus killed "in the line of overseas duty," preparing to say Palm Sunday Mass in an unused classroom as dusk was setting in.

* * *

IN A statement, Fr. Jerome Adriatico, SVD, provincial superior, said the killing of Father Francis was "an eye-opener (for) us," because "we became more aware that the old order of life in our missions may not be good enough."

"We hope that we will not be discouraged in our missionary undertaking but will take the challenge to respond to the priority of the SVD to work in places where (the) Gospel is insufficiently preached," he added.

What did Father Adriatico mean? There are several theories on why the suspects—identified in sworn affidavits and witness interviews as Nestor Awingan (the gunman) and accomplices Acmor Bonggawon, Joel Awingan and an unidentified companion—followed Father Francis from the town proper of Lubuagan to Mabongtot.

Some say that Nestor Awingan wanted to sell his Armalite to the priest, but the priest rebuffed the offer. Others say the Awingans, who do not hail from Mabongtot, were feuding with another clan from Mabongtot, and that killing a "stranger" was their way of avenging the death of a clan member without triggering another killing.

Whatever the reason, it's clear the shooting of Father Francis was premeditated. Several witnesses attest that before Father Francis entered the classroom to say Mass, Nestor Awingan had approached him and said: "*Maghanda ka* (Get ready)."

* * *

THE MISSIONARY'S life is not just difficult and physically challenging, but also fraught with danger.

One would think that, imbued with zeal to spread the faith and stand as witness to Christ by sharing the life of the "unreached" and the very poor, missionaries would be welcomed and embraced by people thirsting for the Church's presence. But the sad truth is that not everyone in mission areas appreciates or welcomes the missionary's presence. But one would expect that when a missionary is killed as part of a criminal conspiracy (for what else shall we call a murder where the principal suspect deploys accomplices to stand guard while the shooting takes place?), the authorities would at least act with dispatch and bring the killer to justice.

There is no reason for the Kalinga police to sit on their hands since so many witnesses have already told them what they saw and heard, particularly who shot Father Francis. But why are the suspects still roaming free and posing a threat to the safety of witnesses?

Is there something about the "old order of life" in Lubuagan and other areas that fosters violence on the scale of the murder of Father Francis?

(More on this in the next column.)

A Belgian traveler's tale

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHEN MY COMPUTER STARTED TO SLOW down and hang, I realized it was full of unused files accumulated over the years. Unlike my study, which is bursting with books and papers, the computer hard drive is a wonderful storage space, but it does have its limits. So last weekend, I did some housekeeping by opening each file, deleting some, making hard copies of others.

One of the files I found were excerpts from a Belgian travel account of the Philippines that was sent by a reader from the Asian Development Bank. Jacques de Coutre, a jeweler from Bruges, arrived in Manila in 1597 and found enough business to stay two and a half years. A jeweler who had the ear of the Spanish governor-general reminded me of Simoun in Rizal's "El Filibusterismo," so I read this narrative, translated from the original Spanish by two Belgian academics in 1988. Manuscript copies turned up in 1969 in the National Libraries of Spain and Portugal.

De Coutre narrates the uneasy relationship between the Spanish and the Chinese:

"As far as the city is concerned, she is walled with cobblestone streets as in the best European cities and there are nice buildings and palaces. In the suburbs one will find Chinese. Their houses are made of wooden planks, covered with straw. More than 40,000 Chinese live there, all of them traders, skilled craftsmen and laborers. While creative and energetic the Spanish do not trust them because they are treacherous. When Governor [Dasmarinas] sailed to the Moluccas, he took them as rowers on his galleon and during the journey they started a rebellion. They killed him and all the other Spanish on that galleon.

"When I was still in the city, the people of the suburbs had risen against the Spanish. On that occasion they also killed Don Luis Peres, son of Governor [Dasmarinas]. In return the Spanish and their trusted Indians [natives] attacked the Chinese and killed more than 12,000 and took 6,000 prisoners. Hence no single Chinese lives there anymore, but they provided the city with all living means."

The Galleon Trade kept Manila busy. "The country has gold mines but the inhabitants are lazy people, they prefer more to enjoy life than hard work. They do not want to extract more from the mines that is needed to pay their dues. There is much silver from New Spain, because each year three or four ships with silver and merchandise arrive from Acapulco in Manila. Also from the Moluccas and other harbors arrive many ships that cause a lot of trade activity and pushing of seamen. The Indians that are warlike people are very skilled in using Spanish swords and have demonstrated this on many occasions.

"The city is not only very well walled but also has a strong garrison of valiant Spanish soldiers who always attached—and still do—much honor to defend themselves against their enemies, whether European or southern. When I was there it happened that a Dutch warship moored at the quay. They stayed there for 20 days and obstructed other ships. In the meantime Governor Francisco [Tello] prepared a ship, a galleon and a warship on which 500 Spanish embarked, most of them noble and important people. The leader, Dr. Antonio de Morga, knew more about writing than about weapons. Captain Arçego from Biscay led the galleon.

"As soon as the enemy saw them sailing out, they positioned for battle and waited with full sails. When they approached them, our (people) started to fire cannonballs, until they were positioned behind Fortune Island, where our leader boarded the Dutch captain ship. After they had fought for five hours, our galleon arrived and fired four shots on the enemy. They shouted from the deck: 'We surrender, we surrender.'

"The Spanish who sat on top immediately stopped shooting and told Captain Arçego that he could leave without any worry. When the general of the Dutch noticed that Captain Arçego, our admiral, had left, they started to shoot again. The ship of Antonio de Morga was split open. He was not a fighter, and as soon he noticed that his ship was taking water, he ordered his men to cut the ropes attaching them to the other ship. Because of this they sank and everybody drowned. Only Dr. Antonio de Morga and six men escaped on a raft (this loss was much deplored because a lot of noble people from Manila perished).

"When the Dutch general noticed that his ship was freed and that our leader was at the bottom of the sea, he assisted by killing the men that were swimming around. After this they raised the sails and left. Captain Arçego took de warship and brought Dutch prisoners along; 13 of them were strangled, while 12 of them converted and died as good Christians. Only Admiral Lambert Biseman died as a heretic.

"Since I was there, I acted as translator. Because the other five were still children, their lives were spared. The bodies of the Catholics were buried with much honor. This happened in the presence of all orders and noble people who brought them for burial to the chapel of Santa Potenciana."

Now we have three accounts of the same story: Morga's self-serving narrative of the battle, that of his opponent Van Noort, and yet another by De Coutre. It is time to revisit the National Museum to see the San Diego, Morga's flagship, and the contents excavated from the sea off Fortune Island.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Party-list maze

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WITH THE PARTY-LIST ORGANIZATIONS MADLY SCRAMbling for publicity, one of them just had to do it. Alyansa ng Sambayanan para sa Pagbabago (ASAP) activists romped through a shopping mall, dressed in plastic raincoats with nothing underneath except their briefs (and I don't mean written ones). Their point? Good governance needs (gulp) transparency.

Innovative as ASAP was, their publicity stunt only showed how the party-list groups have limited access to the public to explain their platforms. Which is a shame because the system, created by RA 7941, was intended to allow disadvantaged groups representation in Congress. Under that law, a party-list organization gets one seat in Congress for every 2 percent they can garner of the total votes. For example, a group that gets 6 percent of total votes cast would have three seats. The law provides that up to 20 percent of the total number of seats in Congress can go to party-list organizations.

The party-list system has allowed a number of legislators to get into Congress without having to use guns, goons, gold or glitter. In previous Congresses, we've had a few party-list representatives making it, mainly from politically progressive organizations. Bayan Muna and Akbayan, for example, had three seats each in the present Congress.

Once in Congress, these party-list representatives can make or break initiatives, so I can believe Akbayan's Etta Rosales when she says that there are party-list organizations acting as fronts for Malacañang, apparently hoping to win seats and block anti-Arroyo moves in the new Congress.

Voting for a party-list group isn't easy, given the lack of information about the groups, including something as basic as the organization representatives. The Commission on Elections (Comelec) refused to release the list of the party-list nominees until Akbayan filed a case with the Supreme Court. Akbayan won the case and the Comelec has since released the list, which was published in the INQUIRER last Saturday.

The list was helpful for exposing some of these party-list organizations' hidden agendas. One of the more glaring examples is Bantay, which has Jovito Palparan Jr., who has been accused of numerous human rights violations, as its lead nominee. There is also Banat, whose No. 2 nominee is Raul Lambino, one of the main pushers of Charter change.

Knowing who the candidates is helpful, but I still remain in the dark about most of the groups' platforms. One of my research colleagues, lawyer Mai Taqueban, helped me with an Internet search for websites and platforms. Both of us noted how difficult it was to find websites and for the groups that did have one, their sites weren't exactly exciting. The party-list groups clearly need to recruit spin doctors and public relations people.

I can't endorse any one party-list organization, but I thought I'd share some of the possibilities with readers to help them through the maze, or should I say, alphabet soup (with a lot of A's). Because of space limitations, I can only list three nominees for each group. On your ballot, don't forget that you can vote for only one group. You will be voting for the organization, not for a particular nominee. I'm listing the nominees only to give you an idea of what the organizations stand for.

Progressive groups

The government propaganda machine and the military have tried to discredit many of the party-list organizations as "leftist"—even "communist." I'll say this: we need more leftist parties and I wish we'd reach the political maturity where we can have communist and socialist parties running openly. Throughout the world, including most of Asia, communist parties are legal and engaged in parliamentary struggles. Even the Maoist Communist Party of Nepal, which was engaged in a bloody insurgency for years, just gave up armed struggle to run for parliament.

Our leftist party-list organizations span the ideological spectrum. Akbayan and Bayan Muna have very different ideological positions and are sometimes (often?) at odds with each other. Generally though, the leftist party-list organizations that have won seats in the past have a fairly good record of fiscalizing the traditional politicians and have united on many bills oriented toward social reform.

It's not surprising that the Arroyo administration has been trying to discredit these groups. The party-list organizations have strong mass membership at the grass-roots level, and garner votes because of their long track record of serving people at the grass-roots level. Here are the progressive organizations in alphabetical order (I have friends in all these groups so I don't want to be accused of playing favorites):

Akbayan (www.akbayan.org)—Ana Theresa Hontiveros-Baraquel; Walden Bello; Enrico Dayanghirang.

Anak Pawis (www.anakpawis.org)—Crispin Beltran, Rafael Mariano, Joel Maglunsod.

Bayan Muna (www.bayanmuna.net)—Saturnino Ocampo, Teodoro Casino, Neri Colmenares.

Sanlakas (geocities.com/sanlakasonline/?20077)—Jose Virgilio Bautista, Nilda Lagman-Sevilla and Wilson Fortaleza.

You might also want to consider CIBAC (Citizens' Battle Against Corruption, www.cibac.org), which doesn't belong to the Left. Their nominees are Joel Villanueva, Luis Lokan Jr. and Cinchona Gonzales. Villanueva made it to the present Congress and has supported many forward-looking initiatives.

Sectors

The party-list system would have been ideal for boosting sectoral representation, especially from such groups as senior citizens, or small businesses. Some of the party-list names hint at such representation, but Mai and I could not find websites to describe their work or their platform. The best we can do is list organizations for three important sectors: women, overseas workers and, would you believe, scientists?

There are two women's party-list organizations worth checking out, both with progressive political lines and with a proven pro-women track record in the previous Congress. There's Abanse Pinay (www.AbansePinay.com), whose nominees are Teresa Fernandez, Kalayaan Constantino and Yasmin Busran Lao; and Gabriela, with Liza Maza, Luzviminda Ilagan and Flora Belinan. We could not find a website for Gabriela. I will admit personal ties with Abanse Pinay, knowing Kala and Yasmin, the latter being a Muslim development worker and a religious scholar.

Ahon (www.ahonpinoy.org) has more traditional personalities as their nominees (Dante Ang II, Bernardo Ople and Ernesto Herrera), but they have a well-defined agenda about what could be done for overseas workers.

Finally, I'd consider Agham (www.agham.org), a party-list organization for the science and technology sector. There's irony in having scientists as a disadvantaged group, but that's exactly who we are in the Philippines, where movie celebrities have a greater say in public affairs than scientists. Agham's nominees are Emil Javier, Saeed Daof and Angel Alcala. With Alcala as one of their leaders, it's not surprising Agham also has a strong pro-environment position.

A child's wish

LETTERS PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MY NAME IS ANNE AND I AM 9 YEARS old. I just want to say something. When I saw the INQUIRER this morning, I read that many people are getting killed by guns.

Guns are very dangerous.

The law does not allow people to bring guns, and I see the police arresting those with guns in their houses. How come many people in their cars and on the streets have guns? This is making me very sad.

I told my mom that, maybe, we can tell the President not to allow the sale of guns to people who do not need it. I don't want to see children and nice people getting hurt because of guns or because they are hot-tempered.

I want children to grow up with daddies and mommies, and for mommies and daddies not to lose their children; and for families to be complete.

—ANNE PALLERA,
pallera1@aol.com

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

BDA no track record, not reliable as conduit of US funds for ARMM

THE MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT is all praise for the $145-million US aid for Mindanao. Jun Mantawil, chair of the peace negotiating panel of the MILF, has urged the US government not to use the aid as a counterinsurgency tool against the separatist force. He has also suggested that to avert its misuse, the aid should be used to fund the projects of the Bangsa Moro Development Agency (BDA).

There is nothing wrong with Mantawil's concern and suggestion. But we have reservations about making BDA the conduit of the funds or the implementing arm of US-funded projects. For one, BDA does not have any track record to speak of. Even the Bangsa Moro people cannot ignore the sorry record of the Southern Philippines Development Authority (SPDA), which was under the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao: Funds did not only go to the wrong pockets; a large amount of what should have gone to projects that would have alleviated the plight of ARMM's poor was spent to buy firearms and ammunitions and to finance ghost projects.

Will BDA be any different from SPDA? We agree to the proposition that BDA must participate in the implementation of the projects, but we need to know what BDA can do and has done to guarantee that nothing will go to finance MILF insurgency and its separatist agenda.

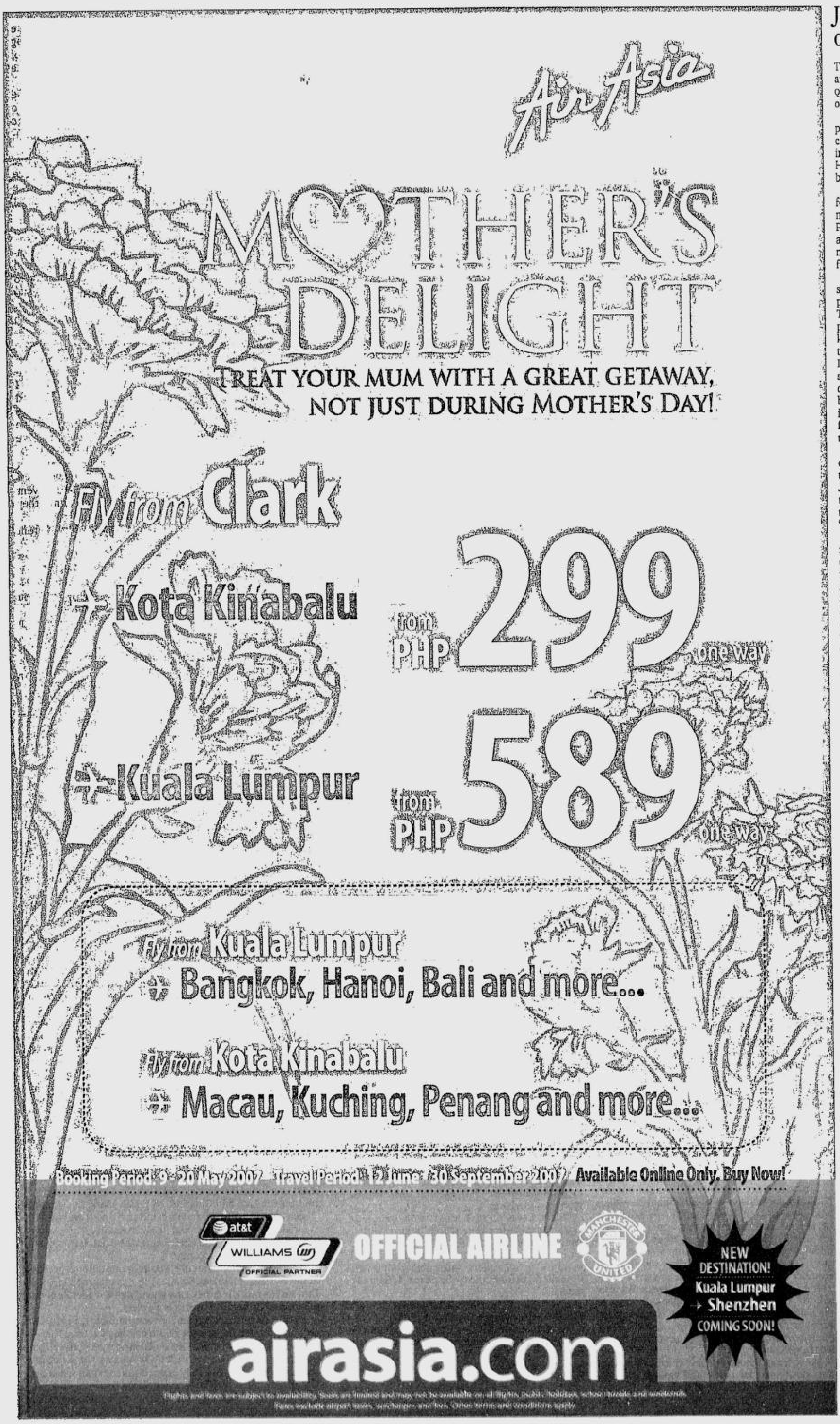
To allay the fears, it would be good for BDA to include in its composition representatives from Christian and other indigenous communities. The agency then will become a genuine tool for peace-building and development.

On the other hand, the MILF has nothing to complain of. In the towns and provinces where Balikatan Exercises involving US troops were held, no tool for counterinsurgency had been put up. The projects were all for improving development infrastructure. Of course, Filipino soldiers were trained in new warfare against terrorism. Provided the MILF has nothing to do with terrorist activities—which it publicly claims it abhors—then there is no reason at all for its concerns.

Moreover, the MILF has already seen how the United States and the European nations work out development aid for displaced communities in Mindanao's conflict areas. The United States has also quietly funded not a few development and livelihood projects for former guerillas of the Moro National Liberation Front after it signed a peace agreement with the government. These projects were only made possible when the guns of war went silent. In some extreme instances, the aid continues even when some elements of the secessionist fronts are saber-rattling.

To fast-track and make the aid program reach to as many distressed and depressed communities in Mindanao, there is only one solution. Remove the barriers on the highway that lead to peace. Stop the monotony of protracted negotiations, sign the peace pact and buckle down to work for the development of the Bangsa Moro people, and Mindanao progress will follow.

—ED PALMA,
edpalma1960@yahoo.com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Jesus was a stern critic of oppressive power

THE EDITORIAL "BEYOND THE PASSION" and the commentary "Missing the Point" (INQUIRER, 4/5/07) made me reflect more deeply on the realities in our Christian nation.

Many Christians of our time indeed miss the point in the story of the life of Jesus Christ, focusing more on the "externals" of remembering His crucifixion and death rather than on His proclamation of God's kingdom and the blessings of peace and justice.

As Christians, we should be reminded that for Jesus, "justice, mercy and fidelity" are more important. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and compassion and fidelity." (Mt 23:23)

Many of us are not aware that Jesus was a stern critic of the oppressive value system, power structures and policies during His time. This drew him into conflict with the economic, political, cultural and religious elite. He was killed by the powerful because he spoke up for the poor and the oppressed and lifted them up. I remember Dr. Carlos Abesamis, S.J., who said: "Not to ask why Jesus was killed is to omit an integral part not only of Jesus' death but of the Jesus story as a whole." The theological meaning of His death as a sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins is only one aspect of that story.

On the other hand, in our contemporary society, we have already modern martyrs—Christians or non-Christians-killed, like Jesus, for serving as witnesses to truth and justice. But unfortunately, despite the international condemnations of the killings, many still "miss the point."

I am sad that even Cardinal Rosales has missed the point: he said the ongoing spree of extrajudicial killings is nothing compared to the ones perpetrated by the Marcos dictatorship. The flow of blood coming from more than 800 peace and justice advocates, including church people, killed under the Arroyo presidency, just a mere speck of blood? Urban militarization "okay," given our martial law experience?

Many of us also miss the point of integrating our Christian faith into action, by proclaiming the good news and denouncing the social ills that afflict our people today. Many of our government and church leaders miss the point by refusing to heed the call of conversion, which should include shedding off their selfish interests and bourgeois thinking and attitude toward the people. Obviously, many politicians have lost their real Christian identity.

Our Christian faith tells us that Jesus rose from the dead. Indeed, beyond His passion, there is the promise of resurrection. We can only be proud of our being a Christian nation if we humbly fulfill our mission to inaugurate God's kingdom and justice here on earth.

—BRO. GILBERT S. BILLENA, O.Carm,
Order of Carmelites,
Justice and Peace
and Integrity of Creation,
brobillena@yahoo.com

With FG's recovery, better GMA expected

SECRETARY EDUARDO ERMITA HAS VIRTUALLY confessed that local executives in Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's party have been bribed with favored allocation of infrastructure funding, and more are promised for those who work for GMA's senatorial candidates (and much more for congressional candidates she needs badly to shield her from a third impeachment attempt). The man has the gall to assert that this is but the normal thing to do.

For one recently bestowed divine grace in the recovery of her husband from certain death, GMA should be remorseful of the unseemly behavior of her political lieutenants and should show some efforts to repair the damage done to the electoral process; she should also show revulsion against the continuing, contemptible plots to undermine the integrity of the coming elections. The demeanor of the Commission on Elections and the military would be revealing of this.

There were reports that no less than the Papal Nuncio celebrated a thanksgiving Mass at St. Luke's Hospital for the First Gentleman's quick recovery. What irreverent defiance it would be to the Holy See if GMA becomes a party to more immoral political machinations in the May 14, 2007 elections as she had been suspected of in the 2004 elections. There is very little time to make up for all the damage done to our electoral process but some indication of contrition will be consolation.

—E. P. DAKANAY JR., 43 Baltazar St.,
Philamlife Village, Pamplona, Las Piñas City

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2007
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
A17

NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
Room 201, Bonuan Apartelle
10 Happy Glen Loop, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074)443-9255
Fax No. (074)443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com.ph

SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU
2nd Floor, Los Baños Bldg.
Cor. Peñaranda and Aguinaldo Sts.
Legazpi City
Telefax No. (052) 480-4182
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/regions
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c/o Cebu Daily News
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Lapid says Pineda got poll documents

Gov says there's plot to rig Pampanga results

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE HEAD OF THE Commission on Elections in Pampanga called as "impossible" the claim by reelectionist Gov. Mark Lapid that one of his five rivals has "illegally acquired" official ballots and election returns (ERs) days ahead of the May 14 elections.

"That's impossible," lawyer Temie Lambino told the INQUIRER on Tuesday.

According to Lambino, the forms have remained in the custody of a Comelec committee supervised by Commissioner Resurreccion Borra. A separate committee oversees the distribution of the forms, he said.

Lambino said pilferage has been made remote because representatives of national candidates have been authorized to guard the forms starting in their printing stage at the government-owned National Printing Office and up to the time these are taken to the Comelec national office.

Lambino said Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos has approved the installation of security cameras to monitor the forms on a 24-hour basis.

The forms, Lambino said, are marked with serial numbers for proper accounting by provincial, town and city treasurers when these are delivered to them a day before the elections.

"Pampanga has not yet received any of its shares of ballots and ERs," Lambino said.

On alert

He said his office continued to be alert for any election-related irregularities.

Lapid, 28, expressed alarm about the alleged anomaly through a press statement on Monday.

"The information reaching our camp is that these documents were purchased at a substantial cost from yet unidentified sources," he said.

These, Lapid said, "could be used to rig the elections in the province."

"With the collusion of the chairman and members of the board of election inspectors, these ballots could easily be stuffed into the ballot boxes, especially when there are no watchers from the opposing camps at the time of the opening of the ballot boxes right before the voting starts," he said.

On the other hand, he said, the "illegally obtained ERs could also be used to switch the authentic copies before the municipal canvassing starts."

"This could be done while the BEIs transport the ERs from the polling places to the sites of the canvassing, which are usually at the municipal hall," Lapid said.

No replies

Lapid and his chief campaigner, Fidel Arcenas, did not reply to INQUIRER calls to ask them to name the gubernatorial candidate behind the supposed scam.

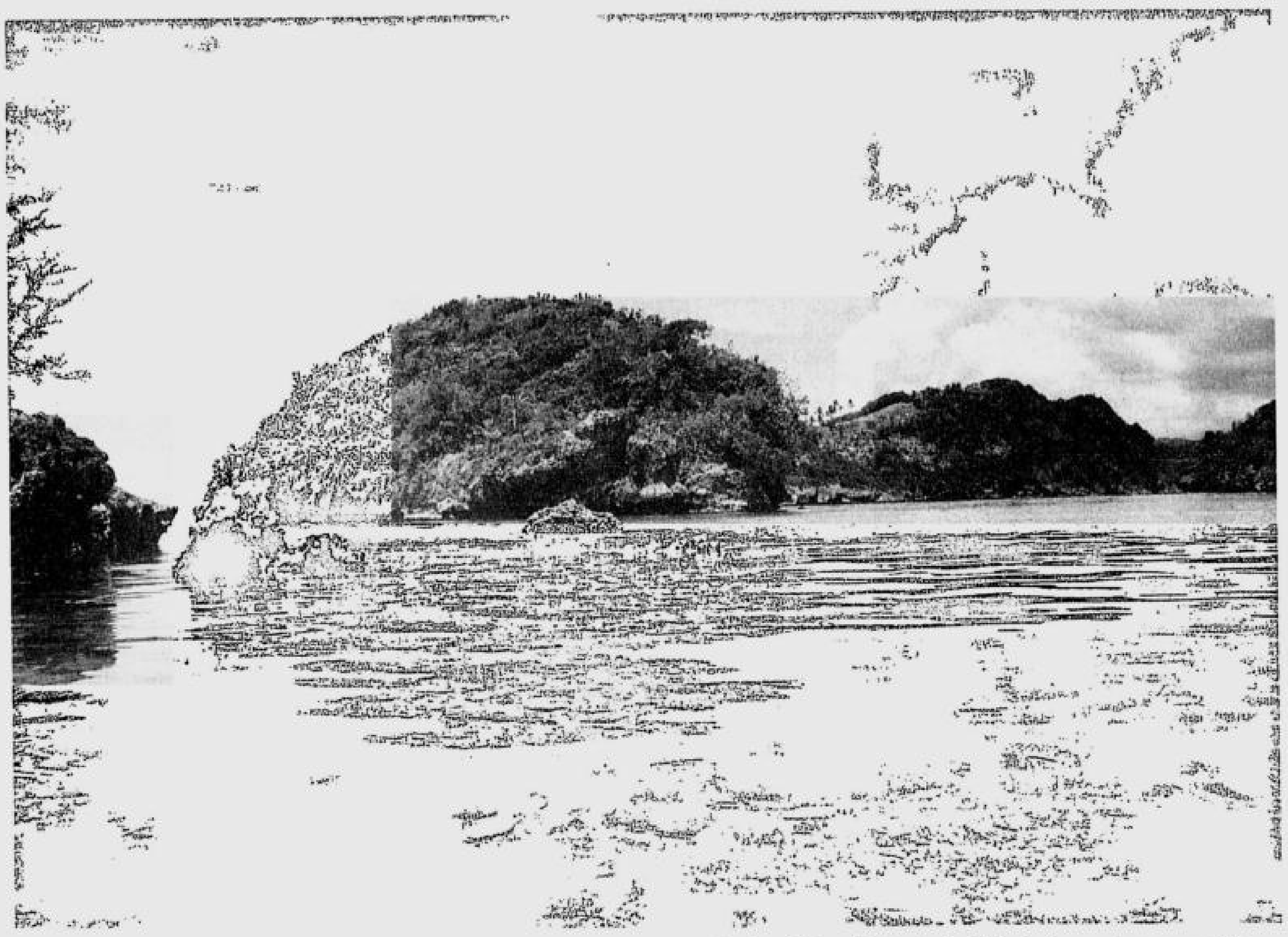
An insider in the Lapid camp identified this to be Board Member Lilia Pineda.

Reached by phone, Pineda described Lapid's claims as "malicious." "How can I do that when I am not the one in power? He and his father (Sen. Manuel Lapid) are the ones in power. They're with the dominant political party. They have all the means to win," she said.

Pineda said she suspected that the Lapids were "starting to create a scenario that in the event there is election cheating, they would blame it on me."

The two are considered front runners in the gubernatorial race, but the entry of Fr. Ed Panlilio has brought an alternative to what some said were candidates tainted with charges of corruption and illegal gambling.

Fr. Panlilio runs his campaign with the help of many volunteers, among them four of the country's most prominent election lawyers. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*



MONREAL in Masbate paints a picture of serenity, a haven for manta rays, one insulated from the heat of politics in the province, one of the election hot spots this coming elections. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Masbate gov faces disqualification case

THE CAMPAIGN FOR ANOTHER term by Masbate Gov. Antonio Kho is in peril after a disqualification case was filed against him for alleged perjury in filing his certificate of candidacy.

Kho was accused of material misrepresentation under oath in his certificate of candidacy as the record of his application for transfer of registration revealed that it was filed on June 29, 2006, or 46 days short of the one year required by the Constitution for congressional candidates.

Kho's certificate of candidacy will only meet the one year requirement on June 29, 2007.

Complainant Leandro Ponferrada, of Bapor, Masbate City, said Governor Kho clearly committed material misrepresentation in his certificate of transfer of residency and voter registration, which violated the constitutional requirement of one year residency for congressional candidates.

Kho incriminated himself by submitting a sworn certificate of transfer of residence and voter registration. "He only has himself to blame for this mess," Ponferrada said.

In his complaint, Ponferrada said "it is judicial knowledge that prior to his 'alleged' transfer of residence, Gov. Antonio Kho is a long-time resident and voter of Precinct No. 35A, Barangay San Rafael, Cataingan, Masbate where he ran and was voted for governor of Masbate in the 2004 national and local elections."

Ponferrada said Kho, in "order to qualify as a voter for the second congressional district, made a material misrepresentation in his application for transfer and registration record that he is a resident of No. 22 Mabini Street, Poblacion, Mandaon, Masbate."

Because of this material misrepresentation, Kho was able to successfully register as a voter of Precint No. 0003A, Barangay Poblacion, Mandaon, Masbate, Ponferrada said.

Two witnesses, Roberto V. Benosa and Antonio M. Barquero, both residents since birth of Barangay Poblacion, Mandaon, Masbate, submitted sworn affidavits that "Governor Kho is not a resident and a qualified voter in their barangay."

In separate sworn affidavits, Benosa and Barquero declared that being longtime residents of Barangay Poblacion, they personally know all residents in their barangays, even their family trees.

They know all occupants of a building for lease owned by a certain Allan Mesa where Governor Kho claimed to be a resident and that they have never seen Governor Kho to be occupying any of the rooms of the said building.

They declared that Governor Kho or his family "is not and has never been physically present in our (Barangay Poblacion) place which could qualify him to be one of our barangay mates."

Bets' bodyguards told to limit selves to securing candidates

CABANATUAN CITY—POLICE OFficials in Nueva Ecija have started implementing strict security measures to ensure a peaceful and orderly conduct of elections in the province that has been rocked by election violence this year.

Senior Supt. Alfredo Caballes, Task Force Nueva Ecija commander, said security escorts of candidates and officials in the province have been ordered to give protection to people they have been assigned to.

"They should not heed any order from the people they secure to conduct checkpoints or to arrest somebody," Caballes told the INQUIRER.

His statement was significant as reports about the April 27 shootout in Jaen town, where two people were killed and 12 others were wounded, showed that the security forces of Rep. Rodolfo Antonino and Jaen mayoral candidate Antonio Esquivel exchanged fires.

"I already introduced to each other all the policemen and soldiers who are being assigned as security details of candidates," Caballes said.

"I told them to extend friendly gestures to one another whenever they meet each other on the road. This way, friction among them would be avoided," he said.

He said he also ordered them not to lend their firearms to civilian aides, relatives of candidates or to the candidates themselves as these people have the "tendency to be trigger happy."

Caballes, deputy regional police director for operations of the Central Luzon police, said additional policemen and soldiers were assigned to Nueva Ecija to prevent the escalation of incidence of election-related violence.

"We have also in our disposal armored personnel carriers (APC) which are always ready to respond to any eventuality," he said.

In Bulacan, Senior Supt. Asher Dolina, provincial police director, said at least 300 soldiers would be sent to 16 of the province's 22 towns to ensure a peaceful conduct of the elections.

Police said additional government troops are needed in several towns where intense political rivalries were noted.

On Friday last week, an Army soldier was killed following a shootout between a group of soldiers and the group of Bocaue mayoral candidate Eduardo Villanueva Jr.

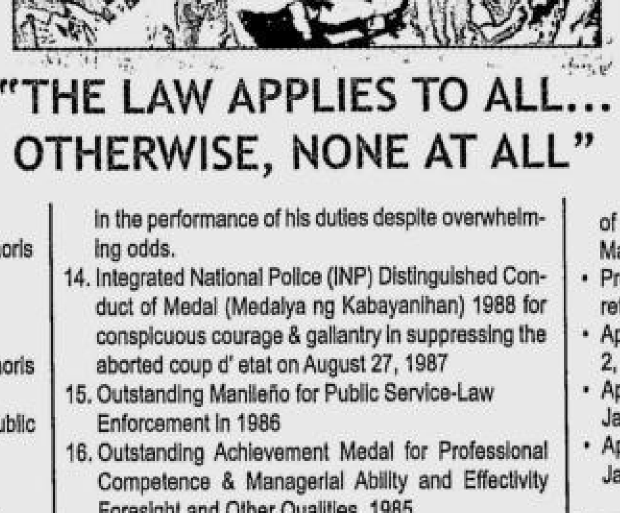
On Saturday, police recovered two fragmentation grenades in the headquarters of a candidate in Sta. Maria town in Bulacan.

In Isabela, a barangay captain and his companion in Quezon town were wounded when two men shot them in Barangay Aurora on Tuesday while they were on their way home from a political rally.

Insp. Melchor Derada, Quezon police chief, said Roman Soriano, village chief of Aurora, was in critical condition at the Cagayan Valley Medical Center in Tuguegarao City.

His companion, John Velasquez, was taken to the QCI Hospital in Quezon.

In Abra, a barangay councilman in Lagangilang town was found dead inside a school compound in the town on Tuesday morning. *Anselmo Roque and Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon, and Villamor Visaya Jr. and Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*



Sama-sama nating labanan ang krimen, kahirapan at katiwalian tungo sa maunlad at mapayapang Manila

"THE LAW APPLIES TO ALL... OTHERWISE, NONE AT ALL"

PLATFORM OF GOVERNMENT

1. Intensify campaign against criminality particularly illegal drugs, prostitution, riots, cellphone snatching, etc., and improve rehabilitation center for drug dependents.
2. Stop collection of illegal taxes/fees nullified by the Supreme Court, and encourage investment thereby promoting economic growth and addressing unemployment problem.
3. Continue extending free college education and technical & vocational courses to deserving students of poor families.
4. Resume the giving of free medicine in all public hospitals and health centers to indigent patients, and the construction of modern hospitals in Districts 3 and 6.
5. Adopt effective measures to stop graft and corruption.
6. Revival of clean and green program, and preservation of historical sites.

AWARDS AND PLAQUES

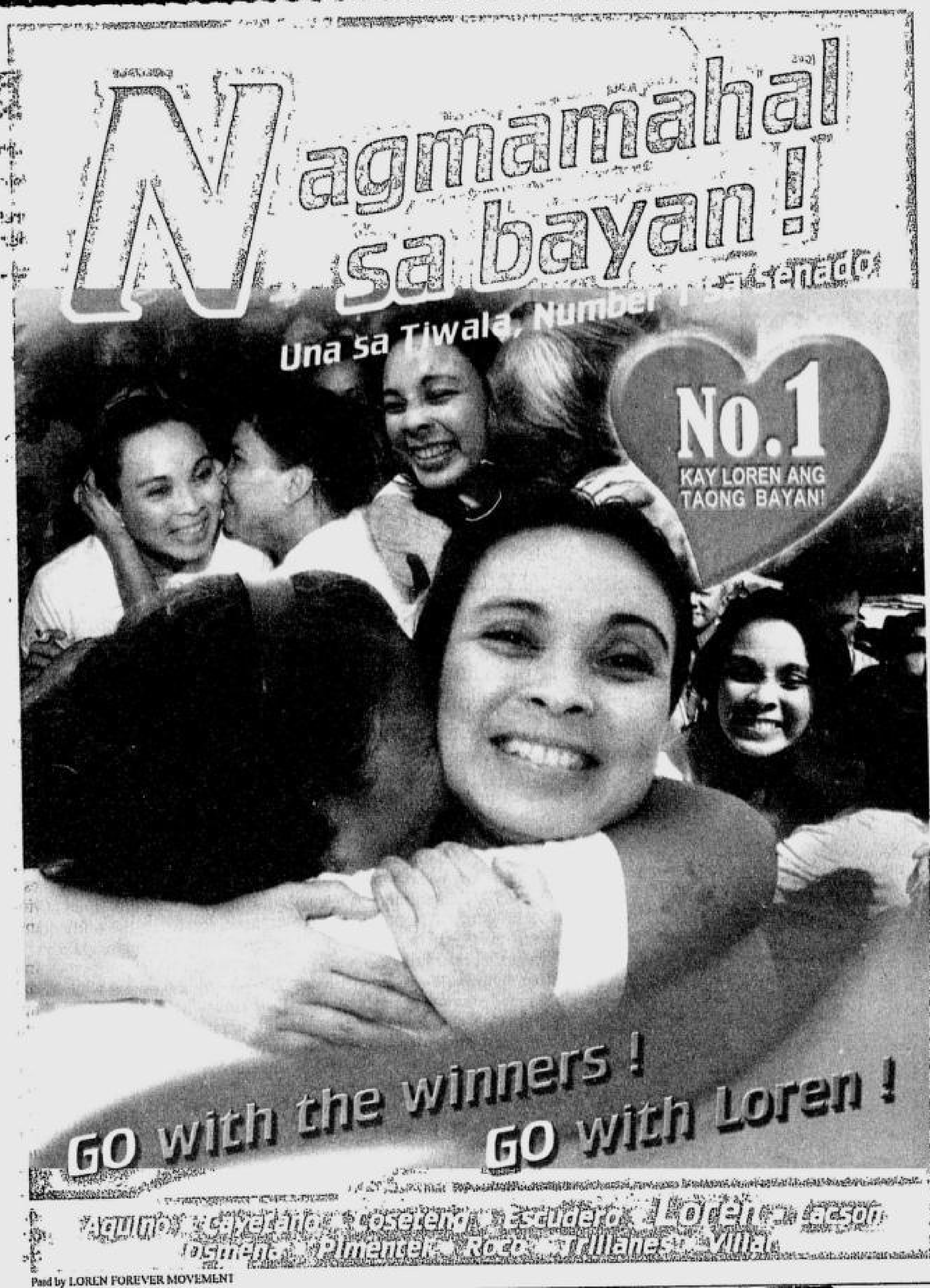
1. Medal of Valor awarded by Brig. Gen. Ricardo Papa, regarding the shooting encounter in 1959
2. Ten Outstanding Filipino Awardee (TOFIL) 1997
3. Chino Roces Award for "having pursued an uncompromising career against criminality"
4. Medal of Merit International Association of Lions Club, 1996
5. Doctorate on Public Administration, Honoris Causa, PLM, 1996
6. Doctorate in Criminology, Phil. College of Criminology, 1996
7. Doctorate on Public Administration, Honoris Causa, FEU, 1995
8. Gintong Ama Awardee for Government & Public Service, 1994
9. Dr. Jose P. Rizal Immortal Awardee, 1994
10. President Osmeña Most Outstanding Public Servant Award, 1992
11. Most Outstanding Law Enforcer-Consumers Union of the Philippines, 1990
12. First Ten Outstanding Policemen of the Philippines (TOPP) Hall of Fame Awardee, Philippine Jaycees, 1990 for being the first policemen to receive seven TOPP Awards
13. Plaque of Recognition by the Archdiocese of Manila for his commitment to honor and integrity in the performance of his duties despite overwhelming odds.
14. Integrated National Police (INP) Distinguished Conduct of Medal (Medalya ng Kabayanihan) 1988 for conspicuous courage & gallantry in suppressing the aborted coup d' etat on August 27, 1987
15. Outstanding Manileño for Public Service-Law Enforcement in 1986
16. Outstanding Achievement Medal for Professional Competence & Managerial Ability and Effectivity Foresight and Other Qualities, 1985
17. INP Efficiency Medal with Fourth Silver Star of Meritorious and Valuable Service during a successful rescue operation, 1983
18. INP Efficiency Medal with Third Silver Star of Meritorious and Valuable Service in the apprehension of a Hong Kong based International Syndicate engaged in the traffic of P17.5M Pesos worth of fake Documentary stramps and for refusing a bribe offer of P100,000
19. INP Efficiency Medal with Second Silver Star of Meritorious and Valuable Service rendered in a shooting encounter on May 1982
20. INP Efficiency Medal with First Silver Star of Meritorious and Valuable Service rendered during Operation Task Force Holy Father, 1981
21. INP Efficiency Medal with First Silver Star of Meritorious and Valuable Service rendered during encounter with 4 armed men at Muelle de Binondo, 1980
22. Citation Award from YMCA as Outstanding Sergeant (1961-1962)
23. Outstanding Achievement Medal awarded by the Minister of National Defense as PNPA Superintendent, 1985
24. More than 500 other plaques of appreciation, citation & commendation

PUBLIC SERVICE RECORD

- Elected Senator of the Republic of the Philippines, 2004 up to present
- Appointed Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government, January 8, 2000 to January 19, 2001.
- Re-elected Mayor of Manila, May 8, 1995 with the highest majority in the history of Manila Politics.
- Elected Mayor of Manila, May 11, 1992.
- Appointed Director of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), December 22, 1989 to March 20, 1992.
- Promoted Police Major General, October 1989 and retired as Chief of Police, December 21, 1989.
- Appointed Director of Western Police District, May 2, 1986.
- Appointed Director of Northern Police District, 5 January 1985 to 1986.
- Appointed Superintendent of PNPA, March 1984 to January 4, 1985.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

- Master in National Security Administration, graduated with honors, National Defense College of the Philippines (1981)
- Bachelor of Laws, University of the East, (1963)
- Bachelor of Business Administration, University of the East, (1951)
- High School, Far Eastern University, (1948)
- Elementary, P. Gomez Elementary School, (1943)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Abalos on Abra: What else to do?

BAGUIO CITY—COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS Chair Benjamin Abalos complained that he was helpless in the face of continuing violence in Abra, but election officials said it did not mean they had given up on the province.

Abalos on Monday said he no longer knew how to proceed with political violence escalating in Abra.

"What else do you want us to do?" he told reporters, saying it was up to Abra officials and residents to change their values to stop the spate of violence.

The latest murder case involved six campaign supporters of Lagayan Mayor Cecilia Luna, who is facing Gov. Vicente Valera in the fight for the lone congressional district race in the province.

Luna has accused Valera of involvement in the attack but the governor has denied this, saying his critics have found him the usual suspect in any political attack in the province.

Valera instead blamed his political rivals, including Luna, for the increasing incidence of violence in the province.

Abra's candidates have signed a peace covenant for the May 14 elections.

Last year, all of the incumbent officials there were implicated in a report filed by a government team that validated an INQUIRER report that many local officials were maintaining armed bodyguards and assassins.

Lawyer Jose Bagwan, Abra election supervisor, said Comelec could try more creative approaches to curb violence by using the peace covenant to threaten erring candidates with disqualification.

Bagwan said Abra candidates have taken the peace covenants for granted because Comelec and law enforcers have no way of enforcing them.

The Omnibus Election Code, however, does not give Comelec the power to threaten candidates with disqualification for violating these covenants, "so we must find other ways of applying them," Bagwan said.

He said Abalos was simply airing his frustrations. "The Comelec will continue to supervise the Abra elections," he said.

SURVIVOR Herminio Ayab recounts the horror of the ambush on a group of supporters of Lagayan Mayor Cecilia Luna.

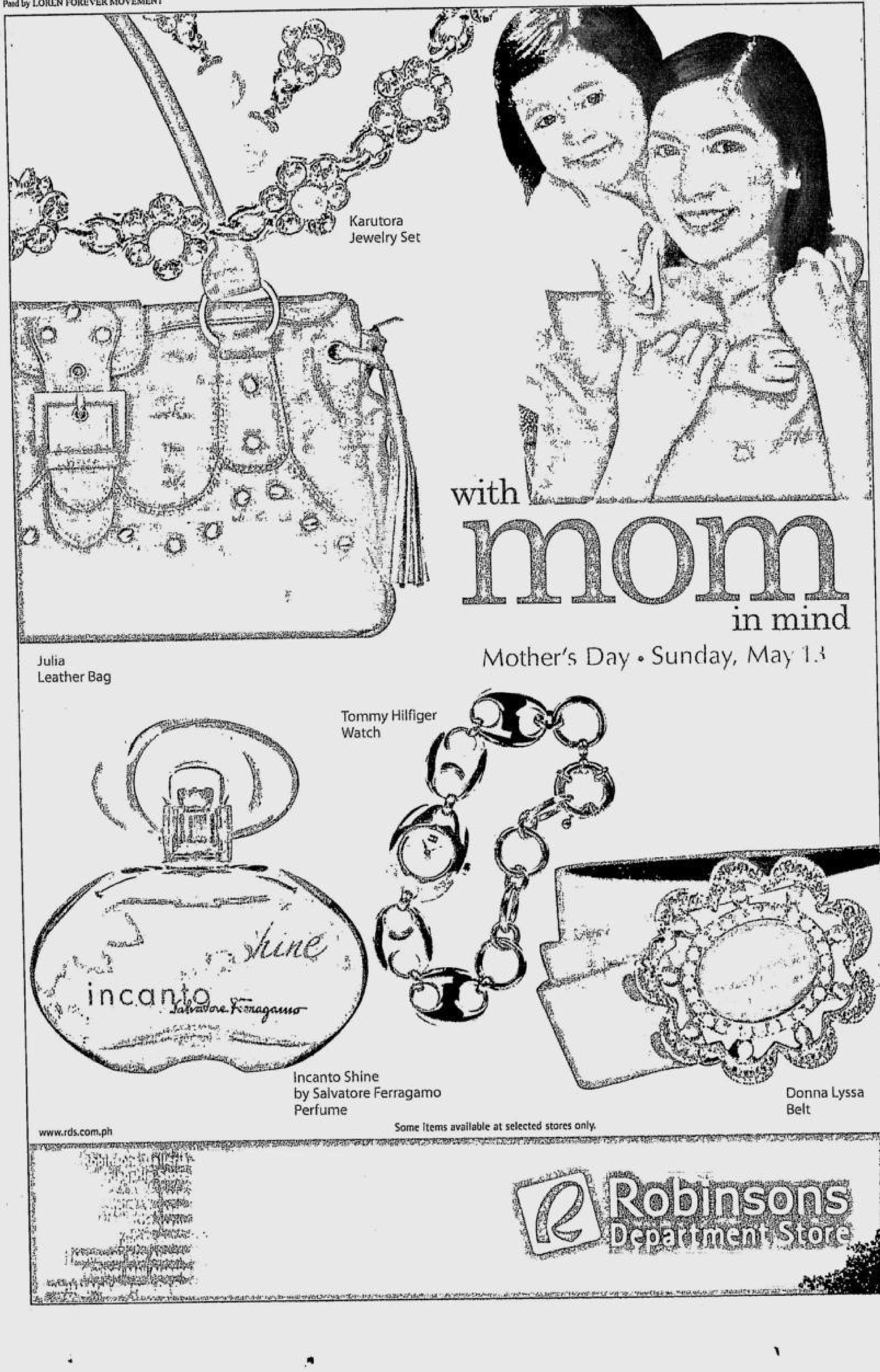
LEONCIO BALBIN/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Bagwan said Commissioner Romeo Brawner, who supervised Abra before Abalos took over as Comelec officer-in-charge, formed an oversight commission that administers the assignments of policemen and soldiers in Abra.

Bagwan said the Comelec could widen the scope of this oversight group to include erring candidates.

In Cabanatuan City, Director General Oscar Calderon, chief of the Philippine National Police, said the PNP would deploy more policemen to Abra to ensure a peaceful conduct of the elections.

"We will show to the public that the presence of the police in that province is not only continuing but is further strengthening," Calderon said. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon, and Anselmo Roque, Inquirer Central Luzon*



Church-based group announces backing for Mabulo campaign

SAN FERNANDO, CAMARINES Sur—A Church-based group announced it was supporting the candidacy of one of its members, Sabas Mabulo, as congressman of the first district of Camarines Sur against one of the sons of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In a statement, the Christian Life Community of the Philippines (CLCP) said it was supporting Mabulo as an expression of "its deep desire to support men and women like him—committed, dedicated, honest, creative, intelligent and effective individuals and politicians."

The CLCP is part of a worldwide association of Christian men and women, adult and youth from all social conditions.

It's a community animated by the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola and inspired by the Blessed Virgin Mary.

"The CLCP firmly stands behind Mabulo's campaign and the approach he will take as a representative," the group said in a statement.

"It is important that we promote truly good candidates," the group added.

God's work

"It is Abang Mabulo's work for the authentic development of all in San Fernando that gives us hope for a better future for the first district of Camarines Sur," said the group.

"One man among us has chosen, to his great risk and sacrifice, to continue sharing Christ's mission in the field of politics."

"The monopoly of political power ... continues to be the cause of too much injustice and violence," said the group.

Charlene Tan, 24, a member of the CLCP, said she saw positive signs in people who have been touched by Mabulo's campaign.

Tan, however, said she also felt sorry for those who had already been corrupted by traditional politics.

"This lady I met asked me if we also had giveaways. I was totally taken off the ground. It was disheartening. She was not at all that poor," she said, recalling an encounter in one of the group's sorties.

But she said in the group's campaign sorties for Mabulo, people were beginning to see the need for change.

For the first time in its 40 years in the Philippines, the CLCP dipped its hands in politics for Mabulo.

MABULO dared challenge what some of his supporters describe as the high and mighty. His campaign has drawn volunteers who remain hopeful change could come without the use of the three Gs—goons, guns and gold.

INQUIRER PHOTO

Motive

Patrick Lim, 24, a graduate of Development Studies at the Ateneo de Manila University and a master in public policy at National University of Singapore, recalled how Mabulo explained his motive in running before CLCP members at a retreat in February.

"*Kuya* Abang (Mabulo) shared his situation that he is up against formidable political forces that included Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr., congressman Luis R. Villafuerte, Dato Arroyo and nine incumbent mayors of the first district of Camarines Sur," Lim said.

"He said he felt it would be a calling to stand up against entrenched politicians who always call the shots but that he felt fear and unworthiness in running for congressman," he added.

Following an announcement by Andaya that all the mayors in the first district of Camarines Sur were solidly behind Dato's bid, the small-town mayor broke expectations.

With the CLCP behind him, Mabulo, is sustaining the congressional race with volunteers around him.

An American priest, Fr. Robert Hogan, S.J., 74, who organized the CLCP here in 1969 and inspired the mayor to join the Catholic formation while he was still studying economics at the Ateneo de Naga College (now university), said he dropped by to lend support. *Juan Escandor Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

INQUIRER *Northern Luzon*

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/regions
Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Rolando B. Fernandez**

Local issues, not GMA power, hound bets

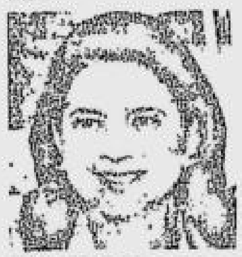
VALERA

LUNA

PANLILIO

ESPINO

LIM


AGBAYANI

LAPID

COJUANGCO

MARCOS JR.

PADACA

WHILE THE MAY 14 ELECtions have been dubbed as the test of the Arroyo administration's political strength through the senatorial and congressional races, voters in the provinces have turned to political aspirants to solve local problems.

The following are the issues that surfaced during the campaign for local posts in Northern and Central Luzon and which voters wanted addressed by the officials that they would put into office on May 14:

Cordillera

Agriculture, peace and order, infrastructure development, illegal logging and tourism are among the key issues that candidates in the Cordillera would have to address.

In Benguet, the future of the local vegetable industry under a free trade system remained a strong rallying point for the platforms of the province's candidates.

The candidates, however, catered most to what the farmers wanted from the beginning—that there should be no vegetable importation even if the country is a World Trade Organization member.

Fearing that the farmers would not vote for them, most candidates, however, have not explained that vegetable imports are inevitable under a free trade system.

Other issues raised during the campaign period in Benguet, however, deserved attention: The review of all bilateral agreements the country signed with other countries which impact on the trade of vegetables; the government's policy of welcoming the exploration of new mine sites and the rehabilitation of abandoned mining areas despite strong opposition from indigenous peoples; and protection of Benguet's forest and watershed resources from siltation, expanding vegetation and erosion.

In Abra, residents and candidates have voiced concern over the deteriorating peace and order condition in the province due to intense political rivalry and the presence of private armies.

Development in Abra has been stalled because major infrastructure projects, like bridges, and paved roads have yet to be completed.

Kalinga voters wanted criminality and peace and order addressed. The province also needed support in marketing its agricultural produce, primarily, its organic rice.

Baguio's key problem is land. Real estate prices in the city are high because most of the lands are considered public reservations, while the remaining portions available for housing are distributed using an antiquated land system.

The resulting overpopulation has helped escalate inflation and even pollution because of the increase in motor vehicles traversing the downtown areas.

Much of the Cordillera relies on tourist arrivals, which are often diverted out to competing regions whenever negative reports arise about choice destinations in the region.

Local governments are looking for ways to stabilize the local economies to survive the inherent instability of their tourism programs.

In Mt. Province, residents are concerned about the fragility of their "peace zones" or areas both the military and the insurgents have agreed to avoid during conflicts.

Local governments have been unable to control the slow, but steady, encroachment of the rebellion into populated areas.

Ilocos

In Ilocos Norte, the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting organized the candidates' forum to provide a venue for candidates to articulate on various issues that matter on the electorate.

Laoag Bishop Sergio Utleg said the May 14 elections are not about choosing between good and evil but electing the better aspirant over the good candidate.

Members of a panel organized by the PPCRV asked the candidates' position on various issues ranging from the operations of "jueteng," tourism, solid waste management to their programs for the poor.

Candidates said they must capitalize on the booming Ilocos tourism industry to attract more investors.

VEGETABLE importation is one of the main issues candidates from the Cordillera have to address.
EV ESPIRITU

Local candidates said funds from the tobacco excise tax must be given directly to the farmers instead of being channeled to the city or provincial government that normally decides on the manner of allocation and on what projects the funds should be used.

In Pangasinan, where residents depend on agriculture and the Lingayen Gulf's marine resources for their livelihood, the major election issues are concrete support to rehabilitate the province's irrigations systems and protection of the province's waters.

Pangasinan has potential to attract tourists but facilities such as hotels are scarce. An airport will also boost tourism in the province.

The province's agricultural, commercial and residential areas suffer yearly from flooding. While flooding in the Agno River basin had been minimized with the construction of the San Roque multipurpose dam in San Manuel town, flooding along the basins of Sinocalan Rivers in central Pangasinan towns and Dagupan City has yet to be addressed.

Employment is in short supply in Pangasinan, thus residents must have access to livelihood programs, especially on food processing and manufacturing. Products such as mangoes and tomatoes are usually abundant during harvest and farmers complain that the prices hit rock bottom. If processing plants are available, they will have ready market and prices may be controlled.

In La Union, voters wanted candidates to address peace and order in some parts of the province and introduce innovations to improve the local agriculture industry.

In Ilocos Sur, provincial candidates are pushing for the creation of a better market for the province's products, especially tobacco, and provide livelihood opportunities in tourism-related activities and agriculture.

Along with agriculture, the potential of La Union as a prime investment area should be harnessed to address the problem of unemployment. Voters also wanted the revival of the tourism industry to generate jobs and push the province among major tourist destinations in the country.

Cagayan Valley

In Nueva Vizcaya, voters are watching the position of candidates on the planned large-scale mining projects of Australasia Philippines Mining Inc. (APMI) in Kasibu town and MTL Philippines Inc. in Quezon town, both of which are reportedly being pushed by the national government.

Officials, according to voters and local leaders, should address alleged fund anomalies in the province, mainly finding who was responsible for the alleged misuse of more than P300 million in real property taxes paid by California Energy, the American firm that operates the Casecnan multipurpose irrigation and power project.

Candidates should find ways to maximize the farming potentials of the province, through the local government-owned Nueva Vizcaya agricultural terminal, whose operations have been hampered by political conflicts.

In Isabela, electoral issues facing candidates are agriculture, education and health support.

Farmers wanted more support in irrigation facilities and ensuring water supply to the province's 189,252-hectare *palay* farms.

Voters wanted the hiring of additional teachers in remote villages and the opening of more government hospitals and clinics.

In Cagayan, voters wanted candidates to clarify their position on alleged graft that attended the construction of the Tuguegarao Town Center and the buying of supposedly overpriced equipment by the provincial government.

Central Luzon

Remigio Mercado, Central Luzon director of the National Economic and Development Authority, said issues are more distinct in the campaign of senatorial candidates. Among these are unemployment, education, poverty and housing.

In Pampanga, Mercado said the major issues are good governance and business development. "Issues are not so pronounced in the local areas," he said.

In Zambales, the Catholic Archdiocese of Iba wanted candidates to present concrete programs on issues like environment, health and employment.

In Bataan, the growing problems of illegal fishing and illegal logging in most coastal and upland towns have become alarming.

The Bataan police have arrested and charged illegal fishers but illegal activities have persisted despite an intensified campaign launched by the provincial government. Illegal logging activities have been noted in the mountainous villages in the towns of Bagac, Morong and Mariveles.

In Bulacan, residents wanted the mining activities in the Biak-na-Bato National Park addressed while farmers wanted to be assured of a continuous supply of irrigation water from the Angat Dam.

In Nueva Ecija, several voters wanted a change in the political leadership in a province ruled by political families like the Josons, Umalis, Violagos, Villareals and Alvarezes. These politicians have at least two members of their respective families fielded for elective posts.

The province has inadequate low cost postharvest facilities for rice harvest and lack of "bagsakan" centers (trading posts) for vegetables and other agricultural produce.

People are also clamoring for the establishment of factories in the province to avoid its heavy reliance on agriculture. They wanted infrastructure development and educational and health assistance to be addressed by candidates.

With the recent spate of election-related violence in the province, Novo Ecijanos also wanted an improved peace and order condition.

In Tarlac, the battle for the hearts and minds of voters rages between gubernatorial candidates Jose Cojuangco Jr. and Victor Yap, with the Cojuangco-owned Hacienda Luisita as the main electoral issue.

Cojuangco and Yap have brought the labor and agrarian issues inside the sugar estate, one of the biggest employers in the province, in their campaign. *Reports from Cristina Arzadon, Leoncio Balbin Jr., Hanna Lacsamana, Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Delmar Cariño, Vincent Cabreza, Frank Cimatu, Desiree Caluza, Estanislao Caldez, Villamor Visaya Jr., Melvin Gascon, Russell Arador, Anselmo Roque, Carmela Reyes, Tonette Orejas and Greg Refraccion*

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Sama-sama tayo
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TEAM UNITY
ng
Pangulong Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
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- Maunlad na Ekonomiya,
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- Manggagawang Sagana

VICTORINO BALAIS
National President
Philippine Transport and General Workers Organization
(**PTGWO**)

ALLAN MONTAÑO
National President
Federation of Free Workers
(**FFW**)

TEMISTOCLES DEJON, JR.
National President
All Workers Alliance Trade Unions
(**AWATU**)

VLADIMIR TUPAZ
National President
Trade Unions of the Philippines and Allied Services (**TUPAS**)

ANGELITO CALDERON
National President
Alliance of Filipino Workers (**AFW**)

JOSE UMALI, JR.
National President
National Union of Bank Employees (**NUBE**)

REGINALD RICOHERMOSO
National Vice-President
National Association of Trade Unions (**NATU**)

GREGORIO DEL PRADO
National Vice-President
Philippine Organization of Labor Unions (**POLU**)

This advertisement is paid for by the above unions

Creation inspires painter

TOOTTEE Chanco-Pacis VINCENT CABREZA

PAINTER TOOTTEE Chanco-Pacis likes to surround herself with plants and flowers, and she has made these, God's creations, the subject of her first solo exhibit recently at the Baguio-Mt. Provinces Museum on Gov. Pack Road in Baguio City. The show also featured an art clinic sponsored by Pacis.

The paintings featured a combination of common species and wild ones like roses, lilies, orchids and dahlias. The title of the show, "Consider the Lilies," was taken from a biblical passage which extolled the lilies for neither toiling nor spinning but looking glorious nonetheless.

Pacis retired when she reached 62 after which she sought the help of several art teachers so she could go in-depth into painting. She was inspired by the sight of flowers that Baguio has in abundance.

When she chose flowers as her subjects, she became a realistic painter who continued to try to express the beauty of creation. She preferred to be realistic in her depiction of flowers because she wanted to capture how living things looked like. The wild flowers growing along sidewalks, she said, are living works of art.

She said her paintings are spiritually inspired. After her series of floral paintings, she plans to work on fruits, vegetables, landscapes and portraits.
Katrina Cabanela and Rona Ortiz

Army tied to abduction of Burgos son

From page A1

legal logging before the local courts in Malolos, he said.

De Leon said the vehicle had been impounded at the headquarters of the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion in Norzagaray since then as part of a working arrangement between the DENR and the Army.

Vehicle still impounded

"Our records show that the XLT jeep with license plate TAB 194 remains impounded at the 56th ID headquarters based in Norzagaray, Bulacan," he said in a statement.

Witnesses said that Burgos, 36, was dragged by unidentified men into a Toyota Revo with Plate No. TAB 194 from the Ever Gotesco mall in Quezon City on April 28. He has been missing since then.

Burgos, an agriculturist, had been giving technical training to members of the Alyansang Magbubukid ng Bulacan, the local chapter of the leftwing Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas since 1999.

De Leon said he had formed a task force to verify the status of the vehicle and coordinate with Col. Noel S. Clement, commanding officer of the 56th IB.

"Our forest protection officers in Bulacan are under strict instructions to assist the Philippine Army in every possible way to shed light on the issue," he said.

Gov't has not done enough

Bishop Deogracias Iniguez of the Diocese of Caloocan yesterday lamented that the government had not taken concrete steps to find Burgos.

"The government is denying involvement but at the same time, they're not doing anything," he said at a press forum in Quezon City.

The disappearance, he added, was a "clear example of repression, a government that is repressing the citizens and their rights in order to push its own agenda."

JONAS BURGOS: Missing now for 10 days

Reelectionist Sen. Joker Arroyo yesterday also assailed the military for "not doing enough" in looking for the young Burgos.

"It is not enough that the Armed Forces say they do not have anything to do (with the kidnapping). They should really look at who abducted (Jonas)," said Arroyo at the weekly Kapihan sa Senado.

Progressives in the minority

"What leaves a bad taste in the mouth is the fact that peaceful reformers are being abducted. They are not armed rebels, they are not waging an armed struggle. They are just reformists," said Arroyo.

But Arroyo did not go as far as to blame the military for Burgos' disappearance. "There are very many progressive elements within the Armed Forces, but they are in the minority," said Arroyo.

He said it was "tragic" that the "acts of a few bad soldiers, incorrigible, despicable soldiers, sometimes taint the entire Armed Forces."

Arroyo has discouraged the public from condemning the entire military establishment because "they also fight, they give up their lives defending us."

But he said the military should start cleansing itself of this negative perception "so that all the things, whatever they are tainted with, will not stick." *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Binay counterattack directed at Ombudsman

From page A1

the complaint and allowing him to file a counteraffidavit.

Later, a smiling Binay told reporters that by the time the 10-day period, which the Ombudsman gave him to file his reply has elapsed, he would have already been "proclaimed" the winner in Makati.

The United Opposition (UNO) leader, who earlier cried political harassment but mockingly thanked President Macapagal-Arroyo for the sympathy votes he claimed to have gained, even predicted that his proclamation could come as early as two days after the May 14 elections.

Verifying only now

Binay and his lawyer began citing the Ombudsman's own rules of procedure after graft investigator Rawn Lopez, a member of the adjudication panel, explained that the hearing was called "to verify the completeness" of the complaint together with supporting documents submitted by Binay's accuser, former Makati City Councilor Oscar Ibay.

Ibay alleged that City Hall, under Binay's watch, employed "ghost employees"—former staffers dropped from the payroll in 2003 but who continued to receive salaries from 2004 to 2005 through the Office of the Mayor.

"You mean you are confirming (the complaint) only now and yet you already had me suspended?" Binay said, addressing Lopez, who sat on the panel headed by Overall Deputy Ombudsman Orlando Casimiro.

Binay's lawyer, Emmanuel Tamase, quoting provisions of Republic Act No. 6770 (Ombudsman's Act of 1989), argued that his client should have first been notified of the complaint and allowed to file a counteraffidavit before going to this "third stage," referring to the hearing.

"You should have waited for an answer," Tamase said.

After the heated exchange among Binay, Tamase and Lopez, Casimiro—who described yesterday's proceedings as a "preliminary conference"—maintained that his panel had found Ibay's complaint "sufficient in form and substance" and that this assessment served as the basis for the suspension order issued on May 3.

Citing his hectic schedule for the day, Binay excused himself for about 10 minutes before the hearing was adjourned.

In media interviews, Binay called the proceedings "defective" and admitted in jest that "I myself am not sure what that (hearing) was about."

"It turned out that I was suspended without (the Ombudsman) spending time first to ask the complainant and the witnesses," he said in Filipino.

Evidence of guilt strong

"Looks like this is a new ball game, but I have accepted that this is happening in government especially with me being the president of UNO. They (the administration) will do all they can to destroy me and to make me lose the elections," he said.

Casimiro, in a post-hearing interview, defended the course taken by his panel, saying the "only requirements" for a suspension order like that slapped on Binay were for "the evidence of guilt to be strong" and for the charges to be "dishonesty, grave misconduct and gross neglect of duty."

"Preventive suspension is not a penalty," he said, but Binay's "continued presence in office might jeopardize the investigation. We are just putting the parties on equal footing."

Ibay, who attended the hearing but did not participate in the discussion, said it was expected of Binay to engage in "grandstanding" during the proceedings.

The mayor, he said, was rightfully suspended "even without notice, to prevent him from using his influence to scare off witnesses or from concealing documents."

An interior undersecretary, accompanied by police officers, said he served the suspension order on Binay on Friday.

Two days before, the Bureau of Internal Revenue froze the city government's bank accounts and the personal accounts of Binay and Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado as part of its efforts to recover unpaid taxes.

Amid objections, including from some administration senatorial candidates, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno deferred on Sunday Binay's suspension until after the elections. Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag also lifted the garnishment order on all but one of the city's bank accounts.

Revenue target

The BIR said it was simply doing its job to ensure it meets the daunting target of collecting P765.85 billion in taxes this year.

"Whether someone is identified with the opposition or the administration doesn't matter. You see, we have a very high collection target, and so we need to collect," said Nelson Aspe, head of the BIR's Makati office.

Aspe reiterated that the BIR was not going after the personal accounts of Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay, but only those of the local government.

Aspe said the BIR earlier froze P1.1 billion of the Makati City government's accounts in several banks in Makati City, but freed about half of the amount on Monday.

The BIR official said the local government's current liabilities only amounted to about P600 million. Aspe said the order of garnishment for some P600 million in bank accounts remained.

Aspe said the Makati City government had failed to pay its obligations despite reminders by the BIR.

Partial payment

He confirmed the Makati City government's claim that it recently paid P200-million, but stressed that the amount was not to settle all its unpaid taxes but only served as partial payment.

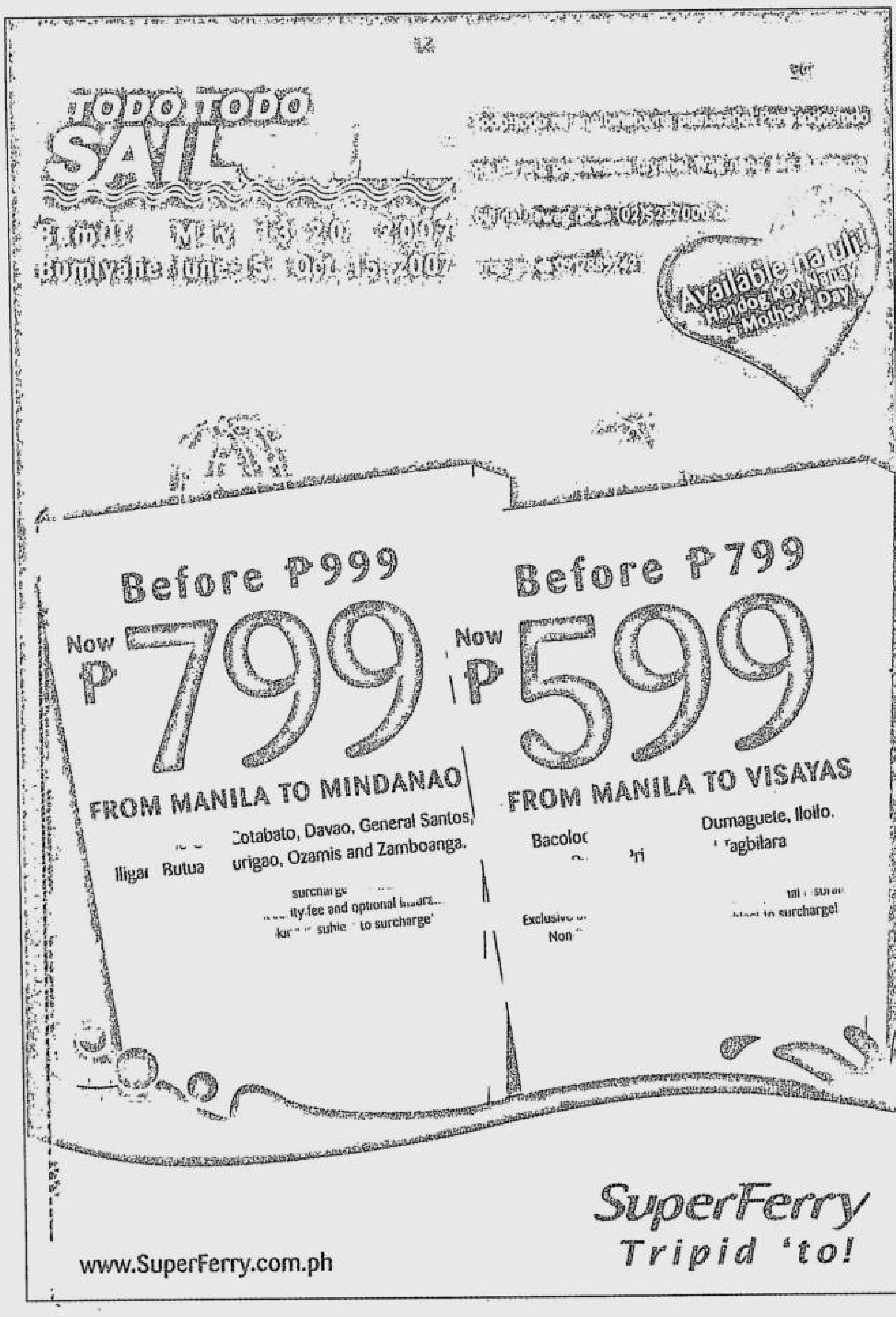
The Makati City government claimed that it was made to understand that the P200-million payment was already a compromise settlement of all its liabilities.

Aspe said the Makati City government received a letter from the BIR in November last year, informing the local government that the P200 million payment only served as partial payment of its liabilities.

Aspe said the estimated P600 million in unpaid taxes covered the taxable periods 1999, 2000 and 2001. The amount consisted of unpaid withholding taxes, and value added and income taxes.

The withholding taxes are made up of taxes withheld from the income of city employees, contractors and suppliers, according to Aspe. The unpaid income taxes and the VAT were those arising from the city's income from its parking lots.

Mr. Sipag at Tiyaga
IBOTO
SENATOR
MANNY
VILLAR



Palace execs, Mike A's sis in party-list groups

From page A1

- Marilou Arroyo, sister of President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo. Ang Kasangga is campaigning for her in Iloilo.

Ang Kasangga is a government-funded micro-financing agency for small and medium enterprises that was spun off into a party-list group.

"We've gotten reports from our supporters that Ang Kasangga had been going around telling people Marilou is one of the nominees. We believe that she will take the place of one of the nominees in the end," Fortaleza said.

- Sheryl Genuino-See, daughter of Efraim Genuino, chair of Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. She is the No. 1 nominee of Bigkis.
- Aissah Tomawis, daughter of party-list Rep. Acmad Tomawis of Ang Laban ng Indiginong Filipino (Alif). Representative Acmad is the group's No. 1 nominee. Other nominees are Raima Macalandong Tomas-Cali, wife Jamela Tomawis and Gamal Tomawis.
- Adelaide Magsaysay, mother of party-list Rep. Eulogio Magsaysay of the Alliance of Volunteer Educators (AVE). The congressman is the first nominee of AVE and the mother is the third nominee. The Magsaysays are part owners of the private school EARIST, according to Sanlakas.
- Kenneth Gatchalian, brother of Valenzuela Rep. Sherwin Gatchalian. He is the third nominee of Anak party-list group.

Mikey's horse trainer

Among the 499 nominees in 91 party-list groups released on Friday by the Comelec after it was ordered to do so by the Supreme Court are Malacañang and other government officials, former police and military officials, and at least four persons who are facing charges in court and are temporarily free on bail.

They include the following:

- Gamaliel A. Cordoba, President Macapagal-Arroyo's undersecretary for appointments. He leads the list of nominees of Alliance of Neo-Conservatives (ANC).

Cordoba, a lawyer, served as assistant executive secretary to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita. A graduate of the Ateneo Law School, Cordoba is a member of the Utopia, the fraternity of Jose Miguel Arroyo.

The ANC's second nominee, Quirino D. de la Torre, was sacked as Philippine National Police (PNP) director for Central Luzon following the violent dispersal of a picket at Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac in November 2005.

- Enrique Galang Jr., who replaced De La Torre as PNP regional director in Central Luzon. Galang is a nominee for UNIMAD. Galang's fellow nominee is Alphonsus P. Crucero, a retired military general, who once served as chief of the 3rd Infantry Division on Panay Island.
- Marcelo Fariñas II, assistant secretary of the Office for External Affairs of the Office of the President. He is the first nominee of Agbiag! Timpuyog Ilocano Inc. (Agbiag). The group's second nominee, Samuel V. Tomas, is an accredited arms suppliers of the PNP.
- Melchor Rosales, interior undersecretary for peace and order. He is the first nominee for Akbay Pinoy OFW-National Inc. (APOI). A retired general, Rosales also served as head of the Office of Civil Defense at the defense department.
- Ruben R. Platon, executive director of the Philippine Public Safety College, one of the agencies under the Department of Interior and Local Government. He is the second nominee for the Alliance for Nationalism and Democracy, an anticommunist group. PPSC is headed by Margarita "Tingting" Cojuangco.
- Edgardo C. Manda, director of the Laguna Lake Development Authority. He is the second nominee for AhonBayan. Its third nominee, Raden Sakaluran, is a a former mayor of a town in Cotabato while its fourth nominee is Antonio Mariano C. Almeda, a horse trainer for Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey," the eldest son of the President.
- Felix Brawner Jr., a brother of Comelec Commissioner Romeo Brawner, is the first nominee of AA-Kasosyo. Brawner Jr. filed on April 11 an affidavit withdrawing his nomination, but the Comelec's law department has yet to act on this, officials said.

No track record

"What track record can they show?" Fortaleza, nominee of Sanlakas, said of Narciso Santiago III and Hussein Pangandaman.

"Are they representing the marginalized sector or a political clan?" Fortaleza asked.

The INQUIRER tried to get his comment, but Secretary Pangandaman did not answer calls or text messages.

Fortaleza said the relatives of government officials were using the party-list system as a backdoor entry to Congress.

People's Reform Party

While the party-list law does not bar marginalized groups from tapping outsiders to be their nominees, the groups must be represented by those coming from their ranks, according to Fortaleza.

Steve Quiambao, ARC convenor, said that the young Santiago was a leader of his mother's People's Reform Party (PRP), which has been pushing for the extension of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

"PRP has been advocating agrarian reform. That's why you can't say he doesn't have a background in agrarian reform," Quiambao said of the young Santiago.

By picking the young Santiago as No. 1 nominee, the ARC has virtually sealed the senator's support in the proposed CARP extension beyond 2008, Quiambao admitted.

ARC's four other nominees—Oscar D. Francisco, Kashmir B. Leyretana, Basilio P. Propongo and Isidro A. Suedad—have deep background in agrarian reform, according to Sanlakas.

Trucking business

Fortaleza noted that the Tomawis family was not representing a marginalized sector.

"Besides being a thriving family enterprise, AVE by its previous track record, was never a marginalized group representing the interests of teachers," Fortaleza said.

The family owns a gas station and a trucking business in Iraq.

Fortaleza said it would have been prudent for the Comelec to have purged its list of questionable party-list groups early on to avoid a repeat of the disenfranchisement of votes in 2001.

That year 58 of the 162 party-list groups were disqualified, disenfranchising 6.6 million votes.

To stop proclamation

Fortaleza said that if any of the relatives of officials gained a seat in the House, Sanlakas would file a case to stop their proclamation based on the eight guidelines issued by the Supreme Court. (*See side bar.*)

"They can't say we're 'sourgraping.' Let's just stick to facts," he said. "But it would be better if the people themselves file the case. The more cases, the better."

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday acknowledged that the poll body had been lax in accrediting party-list organizations, explaining that election commissioners could be "influenced" by the groups' advocacy.

"I would say that somehow (Comelec was lenient)," Abalos told reporters when asked if he thought the Comelec was lenient in its accreditation of the marginalized groups seeking representation in the House.

It was earlier reported that Arsenio Abalos, older brother of the Comelec chair, was the second nominee of Biyaheng Pinoy, a group of tricycle drivers.

Abalos said he himself was wondering how some of the groups were claiming to be marginalized or underrepresented.

FPJ supporters

He took note of the supporters of the late actor Fernando Poe Jr. who named their group Filipinos for Peace, Justice and Progress Movement (FPJPM), as well as the Parents Enabling Parents (PEP) Coalition.

"These supporters of Fernando Poe Jr. (say they) will continue the fight of Fernando Poe. It's not that I am against these people of FPJ. What I am saying is what sector are they representing? And the victims of CAP (College Assurance Plan)? Tell me, what marginalized sector are they?" Abalos said.

Abalos noted that questions of whether a party-list group was indeed a marginalized sector or not have resulted in several petitions for the cancellation of their accreditation.

Not for opposition only

He said it seemed that some critics wanted party-list organizations to be purely opposition groups.

"If you talk in favor of the government you can no longer be a party-list organization. That's wrong. The party-list is not for the opposition alone. It is advocacy for those underrepresented and the marginalized sectors of our society," Abalos said.

He specifically mentioned farmers and public utility vehicle drivers and conductors.

DISQUALIFY FAKE PARTY-LISTS!
PARTIDO NG MANGGAGAWA PARTY-LIST
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MGA BOTO N
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PARTIDO NG MANGGAGAWA PART

MEMBERS of the Partido ng Manggagawa protest inclusion of questionable party-list groups in a rally in front of the Comelec office in Manila. RYAN LIM

Grounds for disqualification of party-list group

THE GROUNDS FOR DISqualification of a party-list group, according to Sanlakas, are the following:

- It is a religious sect or denomination, organization or association organized for religious purposes;
- It advocates violence or unlawful means to seek its goal;
- It is a foreign party or organization;
- It is receiving support from any foreign government, foreign political party, foundation, organization, whether directly or through any of its officers or members or indirectly through third parties for partisan election purposes;
- It violates or fails to comply with laws, rules or regulations relating to elections;
- It declares untruthful statements in its petition;
- It has ceased to exist for at least one year; or
- It fails to participate in the last two preceding elections or fails to obtain at least 2 percent of the votes cast under the party-list system in the two preceding elections for the constituency in which it has registered.

TJ Burgonio

Ex-AFP brass bare 'Oplan Mercury Rising' to rig May 14 polls

From page A1

Of the three candidates named, only Zubiri (along with TU candidates Joker Arroyo, Edgardo Angara and Ralph Recto) has broken into the winning circle in both the Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia surveys.

"In this regard, the [election officers in the said areas] are warned that we and our people will watch their every move until the final count is in," Aparri said.

He added: "Cheating will take place and we will try to limit it. If we can't limit it, then we will bring the issue back to the people. What do you want us to do?"

Roll call

Bantay Boto is made up of Bagong Katipunan-Magdalo, Federation of Retired Commissioned and Enlisted Personnel (or Forces), Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc., Young Enlisted Soldiers with Active and Retired Military-Police for Solidarity (Yes Arms), Grand Order of the United Guardians, Para sa Bayan, and Soldiers and Police for Peace and Progress.

It is seeking to align itself with the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting and National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections to monitor the conduct of the polls from the precinct level to the national canvassing.

The following provinces are the supposed targets for massive cheating: Ilocos Sur, Pampanga, Camarines Norte, Cebu, Bohol, Leyte, Eastern Samar, Lanao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao and Shariff Kabunsuan.

The regions supposedly identified for fraud operations are Central Visayas, Davao, Caraga and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

The identified areas are said to have more than 14.7 million registered voters.

Aparri said Bantay Boto's intelligence information had yet to identify who gave the order to commit fraud.

"[The cheating operation reaches] up to the highest level in those areas mentioned. There was no mention of the Comelec commissioners," he said.

'Huge cash incentives'

Bantay Boto said local government and Commission on Elections officials had been "offered huge cash incentives" to deliver a 12-0 win for TU.

"An added bonus is promised if GO (Genuine Opposition) candidate Alan Peter Cayetano gets zero vote," Aparri said.

He said Bantay Boto had also received information that no less than the office of Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, the AFP chief of staff, had issued verbal instructions to all military commanders to ensure a 12-0 TU win, "especially in military camps where the canvassing of votes will be conducted."

"We also have reports coming from Tarlac, Samar, and Davao Oriental that during the absentee voting in the AFP between May 4 and 6 ... Army personnel were instructed to vote straight TU per verbal order of CGPA (Gen. Romeo Tolentino, commanding general of the Philippine Army)," Aparri said.

He quoted the intelligence report as saying that no Comelec representative was present during the absentee voting in the camps, and that noncommissioned officers stood guard to make sure the soldiers voted for all 12 TU candidates.

Asked to comment, AFP information chief Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said: "Let's not drag the AFP into something it is not doing."

Bacarro said that while there could be some individuals in the military who had wittingly or unwittingly gotten involved in partisan politics, "definitely it's not the entire AFP organization."

Both TU and GO

He added that military personnel found to be engaging in partisan politics would have to face the consequences of their actions.

Aparri and Dominguez said the warning against fraud was addressed to both the administration and opposition slates.

"If we become partisan, we will be ineffective in our advocacy [of keeping the elections' integrity intact]," Dominguez told reporters.

He called on members of the AFP to remain nonpartisan. He urged soldiers to report orders that might compromise their being nonpolitical.

"I'm a former soldier. So when the Armed Forces is questioned, somehow it affects [me]," he said.

Asked what he thought of Esperon continuously being mentioned in allegations of election fraud, Dominguez said: "That's because the 'Hello Garci' controversy had no closure."

He was referring to the purported election fraud in the 2004 presidential election, in which Esperon and other generals were implicated.

But both Aparri and Dominguez expressed the belief that the AFP was generally neutral.

"People like Balutan and Gudani are not alone. There are many of them," Aparri said in reference to retired Gen. Francisco Gudani and Lt. Col. Alexander Balutan.

Gudani was mentioned in the "Hello Garci" tapes as having posed an obstacle to the alleged fraud, and Balutan was his aide.

They testified before the Senate on the alleged fraud in Mindanao during the 2004 elections.

'Dagdag-bawas' network

When the voting precincts close in the afternoon of May 14, the Senate race will begin.

The race will not be among the most qualified, but among those with the most money to spend, according to INQUIRER sources who declined to be named for security reasons.

It has come to be known as *"dagdag-bawas"*—literally "add-subtract"—and it involves the padding and shaving of thousands of votes.

It's a very expensive race, which may explain why a senatorial candidate, according to some estimates, needs as much as P500 million to win.

It's one where the key players—candidates' operators and election officers in towns where the Senate race takes a back seat to the local contests—work best in the shadows of anonymity.

Former staff members of four senators who engaged in "dagdag-bawas" in the ARMM in the 1992, 1998 and 2004 senatorial elections said the network for fraud in the areas where they had operated was still intact.

Money is the key to rev up the network, they said.

A center of the operations is Marawi City, said one of the staffers, a retired military officer.

He said that in 2001, when he moved around the city for his candidate (also currently in the running), operators of another senator (now also running) were also there.

Steps 1 and 2

This was how the ex-military officer explained the supposed process leading to the "end game":

The first step is to prepare the money.

At that time, he had P1 million with him—a small amount for the task, which was to move his candidate's ranking from No. 13 (which would allow a three-year term) to No. 12 (a six-year term).

He was able to get 400,000 extra votes for his candidate through "dagdag-bawas." But the operation still came up short, and the candidate was stuck at No. 13.

The next step is to find a "guide" who would identify the right election officer to bribe.

The most important persons in operations like these are the municipal and provincial election registrars.

They hold the key to such priceless documents as certificates of canvass (COCs).

The costs supposedly vary. In 2001, the going rates were P30,000 to P50,000 per town.

In many instances, candidates' operators needed to buy cooperation from as few as 20 towns to as many as 200 towns, depending on the objective, aside from ensuring the candidate's victory.

Color of money

The "dagdag-bawas" machinery is apparently available to the highest bidder, regardless of the customer's political affiliation.

"There's no loyalty among these people," said another source. "It's all about the color of money."

Continued the ex-military officer:

When polling precincts in the villages close, the ballots are sent to the municipal, town or city election registrar.

The results won't be touched at the village level: "It's too risky and the returns are small. It's better to go wholesale."

The opportunity to cheat lies in the COCs that are in the possession of municipal, city or provincial election registrars.

It is the registrars who would fill up the COCs with tallies from the villages, and it is to them that the money, or the bulk of it, goes.

If a candidate needs only a few thousand votes, only the municipal election registrar is needed to pad the votes coming from village precincts.

If the objective is to make a rival candidate lose, the process is the same—but instead of padding votes, the election registrar deducts from them.

But if the objective is a Senate seat, the operation takes on a larger scale in terms of the number of manufactured votes.

"We're not talking here of thousands of votes. To alter the results of the rankings [in the Senate race], you need hundreds of thousands of votes."

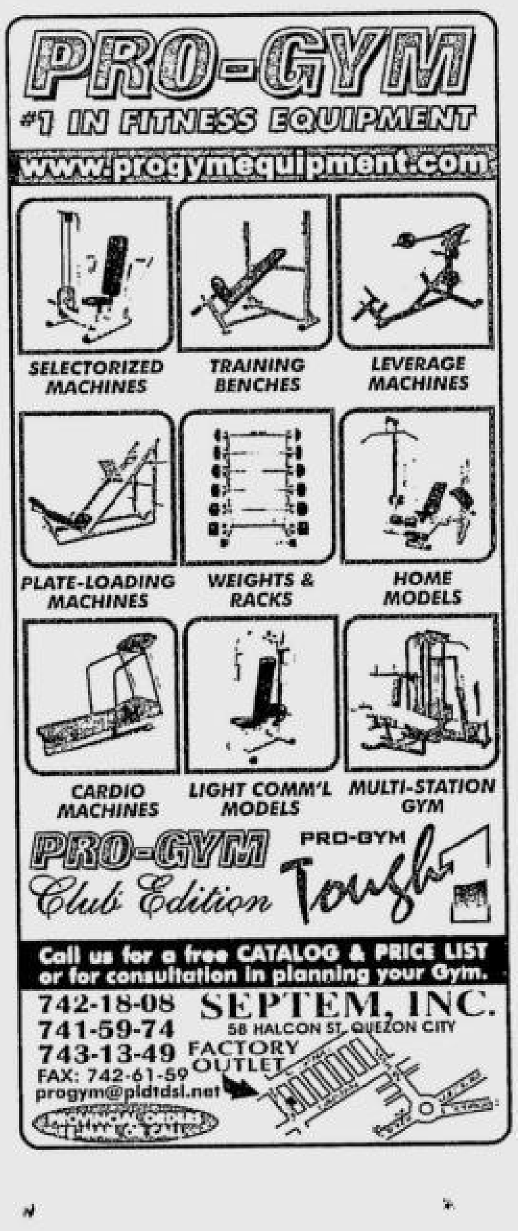
P200 per vote

Bribes ranged from P25 to P50 per vote back in 2001. Today's estimate is up to P200 per vote.

Candidates whose target is a Senate seat, no matter the ranking, will be content with paying only the municipal election registrar.

But there's a bigger fish—the provincial election registrar—for candidates whose objective is to be on top of the winners' list.

With a report from Christine O. Avendaño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Late SPORTS

More Sports stories on A27 to 29

DANNY Seigle of the RP squad puts a shot up against the defense of Alaska import Roselle Ellis. The Nationals played their first game as a team locally at the Araneta Coliseum last night, taking on a crack squad of the league's roster of imports. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Nationals trip PBA imports

By Musong R. Castillo

CALL IT A SMALL VICTORY.

Ranged against crafty PBA imports, Team Philippines last night made up for its disadvantage in size to hammer out a 103-100 decision at the Araneta Coliseum, a win that will not reflect anywhere but only in the good side of the Nationals' collective psyches.

Danny Seigle scored 25 points, Dondon Hontiveros was big in the fourth and Jimmy Alapag, the littlest man on the floor, knocked in the game-turning lay-up with 30.3 seconds left that shoved the Philippines ahead to stay.

It was the first public appearance as a team locally for the RP Five, which was formed in early March and is enjoying massive funding by the PBA teams.

And it did not disappoint the crowd that watched, as it showed fluidity far beyond its young age and the fighting heart and enthusiasm which coach Chot Reyes said would be the keys to realizing the Philippines' Olympic dream.

STANDINGS	W	L
Ginebra	10	2
Red Bull	8	4
Air21	8	4
Alaska	8	4
Talk 'N Text	7	5
Coca-Cola	5	7
San Miguel	5	7
Purefoods	4	9
Sta. Lucia	3	8
Welcoat	2	10

GAMES TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:35 p.m.—Air21 vs Coca-Cola
7:20 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Red Bull

"What's satisfying is (seeing) the obvious joy of the players playing together," Reyes told a handful of reporters. "This will be a big part in our succeeding tournament."

The Nationals played their hearts out in a game they could afford to lose, fighting it out with the bigger imports tooth-and-nail before executing in the stretch to pound out the confidence-boosting win.

"More than anything, wins like this remind us that we can play with a team like that (PBA Imports), which is very similar to the one that Qatar has," Reyes added. "The value of this win is that it sends us off on a good note.

"It was a tough victory and it goes directly into our confidence bank."

Seigle carried the fight early on for the Nationals, while Hontiveros dropped four of his six triples in the fourth period that set the stage up for Alapag's heroics.

Starting out at the point and finishing the game in complete control, Alapag hit a left-handed short stab under heavy pressure from JJ Sullinger, wiping out a 99-100 deficit. Hontiveros put the icing on the cake with two free throws in the final 12.9.

Sullinger, who electrified the crowd with a number of show-stopping moves—including a double-handed follow-up hammer off a Marquin Chandler miss early in the fourth—actually missed a triple of his own after that Alapag basket.

The scores:

RP TEAM 103—Seigle 25, Hontiveros 18, Caguioa 18, Helterbrand 11, Alapag 9, Villanueva 8, Pennisi 4, Raymundo 4, Dela Cruz 4, Taulava 2, De Ocampo 0.

PBA IMPORTS 100—Ellis 23, Nealy 17, Chandler 12, Sullinger 10, Young 10, Compton 10, Daniels 8, White 7, Williams 3.

Quarters: 28-23, 46-43, 76-79, 103-100

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Lito miscast as Makati mayor–Mother Lily

Movie producer, cinema heavyweights endorse Binay

By Fe Zamora

FILM ACTOR LITO LAPID MAY have been fit for the role of governor and senator, but he would be miscast as Makati mayor, movie matriarch Lily Monteverde, who endorsed Mayor Jejomar "Jojo" Binay, said yesterday.

"It's not that I don't like Lito, but Binay is already an established figure in Makati," said Monteverde, producer of several films that starred Lapid. "I endorsed him as governor of Pampanga, then senator. But this is different," she said.

Monteverde, along with actress Susan Roces, producers Armida Siguion Reyna and Marichu Vera Perez, threw their support behind Binay days after he was served a preventive suspension order by the Arroyo administration. The implementation of the suspension has been postponed, however, until after the May 14 elections. Roces, widow of the late Fernando Poe Jr., said it would be "odd" for her to be campaigning for Lapid, who is supported by Malacañang. Binay was Poe's campaign manager in his presidential bid in 2004.

Roces and company also endorsed Abigail Binay, the mayor's daughter, who is seeking the congressional seat in Makati's second district.

3 executives, trader face extradition

By Allison W. Lopez

THREE FILIPINO EXECUTIVES AND A Malaysian businessman wanted for a multimillion-dollar pyramiding scam in the Philippines will be extradited following their arrest in Jakarta, Indonesia last week.

Ricardo Diaz, chief of the National Bureau of Investigation's Criminal Intelligence Division (CRID), said the Department of Justice has requested the extradition of Joseph Luis Eleuterio Bismark, Tagumpay Pablo Perez Kintanar and Donna Marie Imson, the Filipino board directors of Diversified Global Holdings (renamed Gold Question International Ltd.); and managing director Vijayeswaran Vijayaratnam, a Malaysian—who were all apprehended by Interpol Indonesia on May 3.

The four, along with German colleague Kurt Georg Rocco Rinck, who remains at large, were accused of defrauding Patrick D. Zuniga of $625,000 (P29.6 million) starting in 1998. An arrest warrant for two counts of syndicated estafa was issued against the four in April 2006 by Judge Bayani Vargas of of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 29 .

Syndicated estafa is a nonbailable offense and has a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

Based on the facts of the case, the company directors had assured Zuniga of a monthly interest return of $10,000 on his investment for the first six months.

Zuniga, the court said, suffered total losses of $625,000. Diaz, a former NBI Interpol chief, said another complainant, Enrico Noel Uy, had written the NBI in December 2006 to ask for the issuance of "global arrest orders" for the suspects, who were believed to have fled the country.

Earlier reports from the News Straits Times said the three Filipinos and Vijayeswaran were arrested in a Jakarta hotel after a tip allegedly from former Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid. It said the suspects' fraud case in the Philippines amounted to $90 million. *With Cyrian Agujo*

Hospital checkup sought for Ducat

By Allison W. Lopez

HOSTAGE-TAKER ARMANDO "JUN" DUCAT was taken to the Ospital ng Maynila yesterday afternoon after he complained of chest pains during his arraignment for 27 counts of serious illegal detention.

During the 40-minute proceedings, the 56-year-old engineer seemed to be suffering from shortness of breath; his hands were shaking. When Judge Amelia Tria-Infante of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 9 asked Ducat how he was, his lawyer, Antonious Collado, answered that his client was "not feeling well."

Ducat was immediately examined by a doctor who recommended that he be taken to the hospital for a checkup after his arraignment.

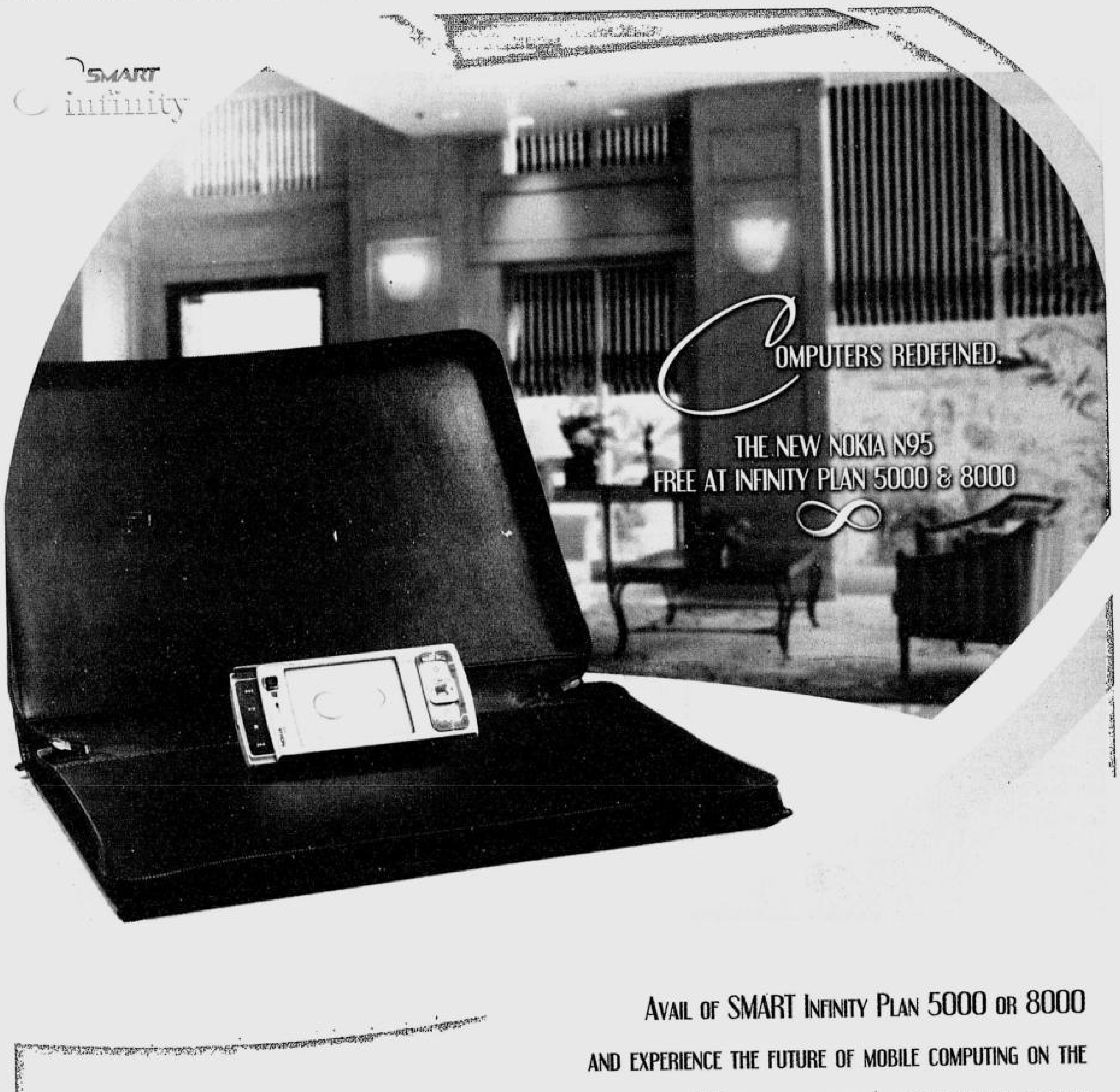
Upon the advice of their lawyers, Ducat and his coaccused, Caezar Carbonell, did not enter a plea, prompting the judge to enter a not guilty plea in their behalf.

"We did not enter a plea because we are questioning and condemning the information filed. We believe there was no probable cause to charge them with illegal detention," said William de los Santos, Carbonell's counsel.

The defense earlier said the evidence against their clients was weak because no one filed a complaint against the two.

Apart from the 27 counts of serious illegal detention, Ducat and Carbonell also face two counts of slight illegal detention and violation of the election gun ban for taking 26 children and three teachers hostage on March 28.

Collado, meanwhile, asked the court to allow his client to undergo a more extensive medical checkup. He earlier told the court that Ducat underwent an angioplasty days before the hostage-taking incident. *With Aaron John del Rosario*



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Couple sues bishop, priest over crypt relocation

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A COUPLE HAS FILED A P1-MILlion damage suit against the bishop of the Archdiocese of Novaliches and a parish priest for allegedly demolishing their son's crypt and transferring his remains to another site without their permission.

Ramon and Marina Leyran, of No. 5 Holden St., Fairview Park, Quezon City, filed a civil case for breach of contract with damages against Bishop Antonio Tobias and Monsignor Jesus Romulo Ranada, rector of The Cathedral Shrine and Parish of the Good Shepherd, in the Quezon City Regional Trial Court last week.

The Leyrans said they bought two crypts at the parish mausoleum for P10,000 in January 1993. They were then issued two certifications stating that lots 24 and 25 have been awarded to them "for their perpetual use and care." In October 2004, the couple entombed the ashes of their son RJ at lot 25 of the ossuary.

The plaintiffs said that three months later, they received a letter from Ranada asking them to relocate the remains of their son because "the present ossuary blocks located right behind the existing sanctuary will have to be moved and relocated."

Transfer

Ranada, according to the couple, said the transfer would give way to the construction of an air-conditioned ossuary for the remains of the diocese's deceased bishops. The Leyrans then sent a letter to the parish priest objecting to the transfer of the crypts.

"Because of the open opposition of the plaintiffs to transfer the crypts, particularly the one containing the remains of their son, they drew the ire of Ranada who used his sermons during his Masses to berate and insult the plaintiffs," the complaint said.

The Leyrans then received a letter from Ranada on July 17, 2006 that said the parish had transferred the remains of their son to another ossuary.

"Ranada made it appear in the letter that the plaintiffs had already received a new ossuary site for their son," the complaint added.

The couple then sent a demand letter to Ranada and Tobias the following month asking them to explain the transfer.

"The uncertainty of the location of what is supposed to be a final resting place for their deceased son caused serious anxiety to the plaintiffs, considering that even Bishop Tobias himself cannot ascertain that the ossuary's new location will be permanent and final as the subsequent renovation and construction will depend on the priest assigned to the parish," the complaint said.

Damages

The Leyrans asked the court to order the respondents to pay P500,000 in moral damages for the "mental anguish, serious anxiety, social humiliation (during Ranada's sermons), and moral shock suffered by the plaintiffs."

The couple also demanded P100,000 in lawyers' fees and another P500,000 in exemplary damages.

INQUIRER tried to contact the bishop for comment, but was told by his secretary July Panday that Tobias, whose rest day was yesterday, was out of the office.

Panday however, said the crypts were only moved about five meters away from the original site as part of the cathedral's renovation project.

"The altar had to be extended to accommodate the other priests especially during concelebrated Masses," Panday told the INQUIRER, stressing that the cathedral was very small.

He pointed out that the old ossuary also contained the remains of the relatives of former parish priests, among other important individuals in the parish.

The INQUIRER also tried to call Ranada, but he could not be reached for comment. *With Verity Ayrah B. Cabigao*

DID YOU KNOW

REALIZING the importance of forecasting volcanic eruptions in a country that hosts more than 200 volcanoes, Republic Act No. 766 was passed in 1952, creating the Commission on Volcanology. In 1982, the commission was restructured and renamed Philippine Institute of Volcanology. In 1984, seismology or the scientific study of earthquakes, was added to the responsibilities of the institute, which then became the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology. It holds office at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

ELEKSYON 2007

A campaign run 'straight from heart'

By Jeannette I. Andrade

IN A RECENT SPEECH AT THE MANILA YACHT Club, Grepor "Butch" Belgica, who is running for Manila vice mayor, made his audience—composed of pastors and church leaders—laugh as he joked about his rivals' propensity for cursing while campaigning.

Belgica and his running mate, Rodolfo "Rudy" Bacani, pride themselves in being the only candidates who refuse to use swear words while emphatically expounding on their electoral platform. "The mouth speaks what is in the heart," he stressed.

Belgica is a pastor and ordained minister of the Gospel of Christ. Bacani, on the other hand, is the younger brother of Bishop Teodoro Bacani. He is also congressman of Manila's 4th District.

The tandem, who are running under the Liberal Party, consider their moral ascendancy and clear vision as their edge over other candidates. "Among the candidates, we are the only ones with a vision. The others have nothing. We are the only ones whose intentions are clear," Belgica pointed out. According to him, the bulk of their supporters come from the religious sector.

Colorful past

Belgica is the first to admit that he has a rather colorful past. He spent time at the National Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City for homicide. There, he found God. After his release, he became a media practitioner before running for councilor in Manila's sixth district. He later served as assistant majority floor leader of the city council from 1995 to 1998.

He and Bacani are running on a platform of government based on upholding the dignity of Manileños by providing them livelihood opportunities. In addition, they want to clean up the city's streets and creeks of both criminals and trash, produce world-class athletes and make the city self-sustaining in terms of finances.

METROBRIEFS

2 rob suspects arrested

OPERATIVES of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) arrested two suspected members of a robbery gang and recovered 11 computers allegedly taken from several Internet cafés, business establishments and houses in various areas in Luzon. Senior Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula, QCPD director, identified the suspects as Maximo Eusebio, 50, of La Loma, Quezon City and Jericho Valencia, 30, of Buendia, Pasay City. They were apprehended by policemen on Retiro Street, La Loma, Quezon City, while on their way to their hideout in Tondo, Manila, on Sunday morning on board a red Tamaraw FX with license plate UUP 490. While searching the FX, police found the computers which were reportedly taken from some establishments in Dagupan City, Cabanatuan City, and other parts of Metro Manila. Gatdula said robbery charges will be filed against the two suspects.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Mason turnover ceremonies

VERY Worshipful Antonio San Luis Jr. has been installed as district deputy grand master of the Masonic NCR-G (Makati, Parañaque, Las Piñas and Pasay) under the jurisdiction of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines. The turnover was held on May 7 at the Jacobo Zobel y Zangronis Masonic Temple in Makati City. The ceremony was presided over by Most Worshipful Jaime Y. Gonzales, Grand Master of Masons in the Philippines. Very Worshipful Antonio San Luis Jr. installed the Grand Lodge Inspectors and VW Sim Cañonero acted as the master of ceremonies. The event was hosted by Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27 headed by Worshipful Master Eduardo S. Alacaraz. The fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons is the oldest, largest and most widely known fraternal organization in the world.

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Dr. Josefina Suarez left an administrative post to start the Elizabeth Seton School in Manila. Armed with her integrity and upright character Dr. Suarez established a Catholic school providing quality education for the nation's youth. Indeed, she is an excellent role model for the new generation.

Roberto Tinsay Jr. transformed his business from a wood shop to poultry farming through sheer determination and prudence. Live within your means, treat your workers fairly - these were his guiding parameters in propelling the J&J Poultry Farm in Cagayan de Oro to success.

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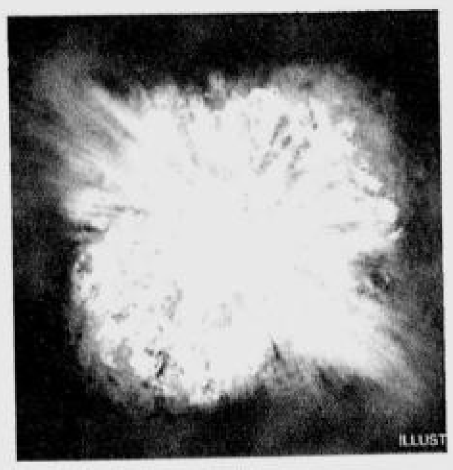

STELLAR BLAST
An artist's illustration shows a supernova, designated as SN 2006gy, which occurred 240 million light years away in a galaxy called NGC 1260SN. A gargantuan explosion ripped apart a star perhaps 150 times more massive than our sun in a relatively nearby galaxy in the most powerful and brightest supernova ever observed, astronomers said on May 7. REUTERS

British media hit Bush over royal blooper

LONDON—BRITISH NEWSPAPERS were scathing on Tuesday about US President George W. Bush's blundering welcome for Queen Elizabeth II, labeling him "Dumb Dubya" and saying he has the "gift for the gaffe."

Bush messed up at a ceremonial welcome for the queen at the White House Monday when he spoke of a visit paid by Elizabeth to mark the 200th anniversary of the US Declaration of Independence from Britain "in 17—in 1976."

After the queen looked up at him from beneath her wide-brimmed black hat, he winked at her, before turning to the laughing audience and telling them: "She gave me a look that only a mother could give a child."

Britain's media, which has reveled in reporting previous Bush bloopers, claimed that this was among his worst.

The nation's biggest-selling paper, the right-wing tabloid Sun, accused Bush of making "one of his great verbal blunders" while the center-right broadsheet The Times headlined its piece: "Oops, he did it again."

"On a morning that should by rights have been frozen in time as a moment of pure pageantry, with military marching bands, pipers trucked out in tricorn hats and powdered wigs, and visiting royalty, one can count on George Bush," the center-left broadsheet The Guardian said.

"The president yesterday once again demonstrated his gift for the gaffe, injecting an unintended sense of levity into the White House welcome for the queen." This was not Bush's first slip in front of the monarch, the Guardian added.

"When she visited the White House in 1991 during his father's presidency, he said he was the black sheep of the Bush family.

"He then asked: 'Who's yours?' The queen did not reply," it said.

The right-wing tabloid The Daily Mail asked: "Is he winking at One?" and said that Bush could have tried to recover from his initial blunder in several ways.

"But turning to her and giving her a sly wink is probably not included in any book of royal etiquette," it added.

In an editorial, center-left tabloid The Daily Mirror dubbed Bush "Dumb Dubya," adding: "Her majesty's withering look spoke volumes, giving the watching public and the president a very clear message.

"Which is more than he ever manages."

In Washington, Bush said the queen's state visit, her first to the United States since 1991, paid tribute to the two nations' "traditions and our shared history," before injecting a reference to the US war on terror.

"Today our two nations are defending liberty against tyranny and terror. We're resisting those who murder the innocent to advance a hateful ideology, whether they kill in New York or London, or Kabul or Baghdad," he said.

The 81-year-old queen, in a black hat and wearing a white jacket trimmed in black over a black skirt, thanked Bush for his welcome and noted the symbolism of such formal visits.

Lampposts near the White House were festooned with Union Jacks and US flags as helicopters and sharpshooters formed part of a tight security cordon around the presidential mansion—which was burned down by British soldiers in 1814.

According to a Buckingham Palace spokesperson, Elizabeth gave Bush a large silver dish fringed with the queen's cypher ("E II R" surmounted by a crown) and the presidential seal. In the center was a Texan lone star surrounded by decorative roses from Bush's home state.

To mark the ceremonial climax of the queen's six-day state visit, the White House polished its best china and crystal tableware for the evening banquet—the first white-tie and tails event of the six-year Bush presidency.

The 134 diners were to include Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and General Peter Pace, chair of the US military joint chiefs of staff. *AFP*

King Herod's tomb found by archaeologist

JERUSALEM—AN ISRAELI ARCHAEOLOGIST said on Tuesday that the tomb of King Herod, famed for expanding the Jewish second temple during his reign in the first century BC, had been discovered in the occupied West Bank.

Pieces of an elaborate sarcophagus believed to contain Herod's remains were found three weeks ago, Ehud Netzer, professor of archaeology at Hebrew University, told a news conference.

"Three weeks ago we found the sarcophagus and we knew that it was it," said Netzer, who led the digs and has been working at the site since 1972.

The tomb was located at Herodium, a mesa rising more than 750 meters above sea level some 12 kilometers south of Jerusalem in the West Bank, Netzer said.

Herod built a palace on the flattened hilltop and was thought to have been buried there, but years of excavations failed to find the burial site.

"The location and unique nature of the findings, as well as the historical record, leave no doubt that this was Herod's burial site," Netzer said, adding that no inscriptions have yet been found.

The sarcophagus was discovered on the northeast slope of the mesa, where archaeological excavation began in August 2006.

It "was broken into hundreds of pieces, no doubt deliberately," Netzer said, adding that it appeared to have been destroyed between 66 and 72 AD during the first Jewish revolt against the Romans.

"It is an important discovery, first of all because Herod is well known," he said. "Secondly, because Herod is a personality that is important to the Christians—he is mentioned many times in the New Testament.

"Thirdly, Herodium is a wonderful building that Herod left us," he added.

Herod, sometimes called Herod the Great, was appointed king of Judea by the Romans in around 40 BC. He greatly expanded the Jewish second temple and ordered building works in Caesaeria, Jericho and at the hilltop fortress of Masada overlooking the Dead Sea. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

3 oil pipelines destroyed in Nigeria

ABUJA—Nigerian rebel group the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) said on Tuesday its fighters had destroyed three major oil pipelines in the delta, where attacks have intensified in the past week. The group said in an email statement that the Italian oil firm Agip's Brass export terminal had been affected by the incidents. Agip spokespersons could not immediately be reached. "Today ... at 0100 hours Nigerian time (0000 GMT), fighters of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta attacked and destroyed three major pipelines in Bayelsa State of the Niger Delta," the group said. *Reuters*

Suicide car bomber kills 16 in Iraq

BAGHDAD—A suicide car bomber tore through a busy market in the Shiite holy city of Kufa on Tuesday morning, killing at least 16 people and wounding 70 in an attack sure to further enflame tensions between Iraq's Sunni and Shiite populations. In response, local authorities closed the entrances to Kufa and its sister holy city of Najaf and imposed a vehicle ban around the revered shrines and mosques in the two towns, said Ahmed Duaible, a local government spokesperson. The 250 kg car bomb at Kufa exploded about 10 a.m. in an area that also included a school and the mayor's office, police said. The 16 killed included women and children, said Salim Naima, spokesperson of the Najaf health department. *AP*

Blast hits Russian gas pipeline

LUKA—An explosion in Ukraine knocked out one of the main pipelines exporting Russian gas to the European Union on Monday, but officials were quick to say that supplies would not be affected. A "large explosion" cut the pipeline, which carries Siberian gas through Ukraine to Germany and other EU clients, said Viktoria Ruban, spokesperson for the Ukrainian emergency situations ministry. The blast occurred at about 1125 GMT close to the village of Luka on a section south of the Ukrainian capital Kiev, tearing out a 30-meter length of pipeline and hurling debris 150 m, she said. The pipeline runs more than 4,000 km from Siberia. *AFP*

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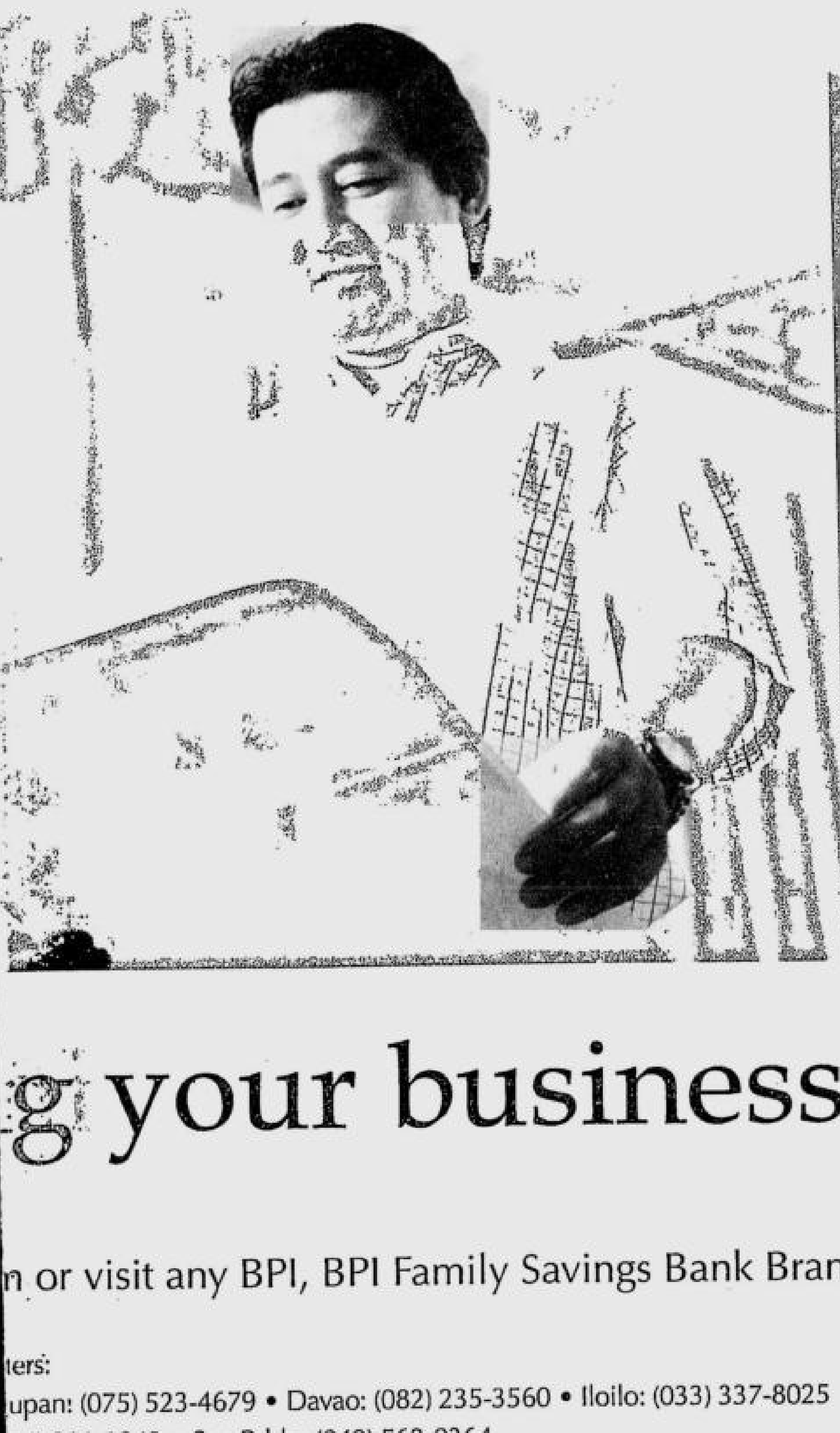

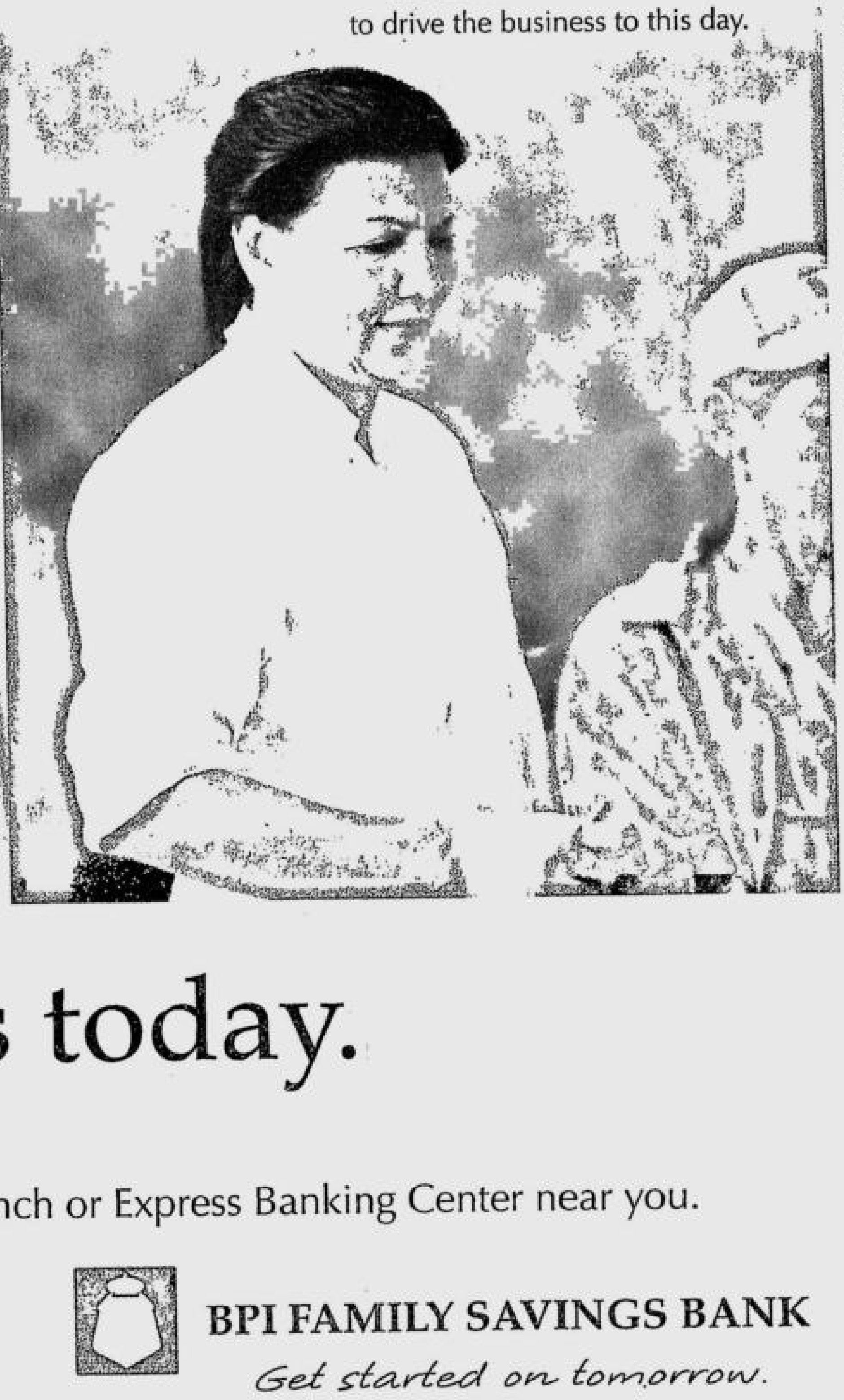

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Editor Luverne B. Gueco

WOLFOWITZ AFP

Wolfowitz broke rules, says WB panel

WASHINGTON—A WORLD BANK PANEL HAS FOUND THAT BANK President Paul Wolfowitz's handling of a promotion and pay increase for his companion represented a conflict of interest and broke rules, but made no recommendation on how he should be reprimanded, board sources said on Monday.

The former US deputy defense secretary, a key architect of the Iraq war, has been given several days to respond to the findings of the panel involving a lucrative deal for his companion, Shaha Riza, a World Bank Middle East expert.

One source close to the World Bank board said the panel found Wolfowitz's actions amounted to conflict of interest, while another source said the panel found he broke internal rules by personally directing Riza's transfer to the State Department with a promotion and salary increase.

A meeting of the 24-nation World Bank board, which will determine whether Wolfowitz should be fired for his actions, is now scheduled for later in the week, possibly on Friday.

"There is no unanimity over how this should be resolved, which is why the ad hoc committee has left it to the board," said one board source, who asked not to be identified.

A senior bank official repeated that Wolfowitz would not resign over the controversy, which he has said is part of a smear campaign designed to discredit his leadership and undermine his anti-corruption campaign.

As Wolfowitz started a critical week, one of his top aides, Kevin Kellems, resigned early on Monday, saying the turmoil at the bank over its current leadership has made it difficult for him to do his job.

Kellems, who served as an advisor to Wolfowitz at the Pentagon from 2002, told Reuters he was leaving to pursue other opportunities.

Reuters

Rescuers find no survivors in Kenyan airliner crash

MBANGA-PONGO—RESCUERS MOUNTED A grisly operation in southern Cameroon Monday to recover the remains of 114 people from the crash site of a Kenyan Airways jet which came down in a violent storm on the weekend.

Luc Ndjodo, prosecutor for the west African country's economic hub Douala, told AFP that the first bodies had been picked up from the mangrove swamp in which the Boeing 737-800 crashed early Saturday.

The dense jungle in the area 20 kilometers southwest of Douala meant it took rescuers 36 hours to find the mangled wreckage of the 6-month-old aircraft.

There were no survivors. The plane was carrying a crew of nine from Kenya and 105 passengers from 26 other countries.

Late Monday Cameroonian civil aviation officials announced that they had found one of the two black boxes from the Kenya Airways plane at the crash site.

"We found the flight data recorder. We still need to recover the cockpit voicet recorder," said civil aviation director general Ignatius Sana Juma.

The black boxes store a wide variety of information such as speed and altitude or the voice communication within the cockpit.

They are also equipped with beacons that aid rescuers in locating them and are vital in ascertaining the cause of a crash.

Police official Emmanuel Meka said the body-recovery operation had stopped for the night but would continue Tuesday.

The plane's jets were ripped from the wings, an AFP journalist at the site reported.

Rescuers made their way through the mud and gnarled pieces of metal, collecting remnants of clothes and bodies which were then transported to the town of Mbanga-Pongo, an hour's walk away, for identification.

Fragments of clothing and objects stuck out of the mud. A teddy bear here, a life preserver there, a food tray, and further away a solitary shoe.

AFP

WRECKAGE from a Kenya Airways plane sits in a swamp at the crash site in the forest near the village of Mbanga-Pongo, east of the city of Douala on May 7. Salvage operations and investigations into the cause of the crash continue. REUTERS

Fresh violence hits French cities

PARIS—FRANCE'S NEXT PRESIDENT Nicolas Sarkozy holidayed Tuesday in Malta ahead of launching a radical reform program, while back home cities across the country were hit by more violent "anti-Sarko" protests.

Sarkozy boarded a yacht in the Mediterranean island with his wife Cecilia and their 10-year-old son Louis on Monday at the start of a three-day break, far from the hectic post-election atmosphere in Paris.

The family arrived there on a private plane after the 52-year-old right-winger's election victory on Sunday. He won 53 percent of the votes to 47 percent for his Socialist rival Segolene Royal.

Sarkozy, who has relentlessly maneuvered his way to power over the past five years, had pre-planned the break to recover from his gruelling campaigning and to mentally ready himself for France's highest office.

He takes over from President Jacques Chirac on May 16.

Sarkozy's election triumph has sparked protests across the country, many of them violent, which began late Sunday and continued Monday night..

The flare-ups echoed Royal's pre-poll warning that a Sarkozy victory could see the country slide into unrest. *AFP*

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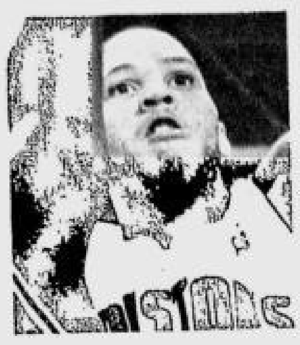

WHAT'S INSIDE

▣ **Pistons** flatten Bulls; Jazz up /A29

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Cebuana defense does the trick

BON BON Custodio of San Miguel-Magnolia drives off a static Ryan Reyes of Henkel Sista in yesterday's game. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Henkel Sista raps Magnolia

By Jasmine W. Payo

CEBUANA LHUILLIER-PERA Padala banked on a constricting defensive strategy to get past Dazz 'Sang Patak, 72-65, and claim solo second in the PBL Unity Cup yesterday at The Arena in San Juan.

"What we did good is we worked on our defense and we controlled the boards," said Cebuana coach Luigi Trillo. "Our offense came because of our defense."

The Moneymen flexed their defensive muscles in the third period, holding the Kitchen Specialists to just 38 percent shooting from the field while making 53 percent of their shots there.

Ken Bono led Cebuana's offensive charge with 15 points while Alfie Grijaldo contributed to the Moneymen's torrid shooting in the third by drilling 10 of his 12 points in the second half.

The Moneymen improved their slate to 5-2, just half a game behind idle Harbour Centre's league-leading 5-1 record.

Earlier, new Fil-Am recruit Ryan Reyes keyed a second-half comeback to lead Henkel Sista to a 67-61 victory over San Miguel-Magnolia.

Playing only his second game, the 6-foot-1 point guard from California rallied the Super Sealers from a 22-34 halftime deficit to finish with 20 points, five assists and five steals.

"It shows he's a really talented player," said coach Caloy Garcia. "In our last game, I thought maybe he wasn't scouted yet, but he played an even better game today."

Reyes, a former high school teammate of NBA three-point champion Jason Kapono of the Miami Heat, debuted with 18 points in just 16 minutes of action last Saturday.

"I just wanted to be a leader, to bring in defense, intensity and team play," said Reyes after powering Sista to its third straight win for a fifth-best 3-4 card.

With the lead up at 50-45, Reyes drilled in nine of the Super Sealers' next 13 points to give them a 63-51 advantage in the final period.

The Beverage Masters dropped to 2-5.

The Kitchen Specialists took their sixth straight loss for a 1-6 record.

A 7-0 spurt gave the Moneymen their biggest lead, 53-40, with 1:15 left in the third quarter.

The scores:

First Game

HENKEL SISTA 67—Reyes 20, Javier 10, Saldua 10, Matias 6, Villamin 6, Bonus 5, Yambao 3, Malabanan 2, Misa 2, Alfad 2, Eman 1, Ebuen 0, Bauzon 0.

SAN MIGUEL-MAGNOLIA 61—Custodio 17, Chan 12, Villanueva 12, Rañeses 11, Benitez 5, Almeda 4, Barcellano 0, Jones 0, Evangelista 0, Bombeo 0, Angeles 0, Doruelo 0.

Quarters: 14-21, 22-34, 50-44, 67-61

Second Game

CEBUANA LHUILLIER 72—Bono 15, Grijaldo 12, Escalona 10, Yee 6, Dela Cuesta 6, Capus 5, Oreta 5, Sta. Maria 5, Kramer 4, Burtscher 2, Dela Peña 2, Solis 0, Dulay 0.

DAZZ 65—Mercado 14, Butel 12, Juntilla 10, Hugnatan 8, Larong 7, Sanz 5, Almacin 4, Rodriguez 3, Labagala 2, Moreno 0.

Quarters: 14-16, 36-30, 55-46, 72-65

GAMES TOMORROW
(Olivarez College Sports Center)
2 p.m.—Burger King vs Harbour Centre
4 p.m.—Toyota Balintawak vs Henkel Sista

Archers, Warriors keep clean slates

LA SALLE AND UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST took separate routes toward the quarterfinal round of the Nike Summer League basketball tournament at the FEU gym yesterday.

The Green Archers subdued the Jose Rizal University Bombers, 83-80, while the Warriors routed the Philippine Christian University Dolphins, 84-68, in Group B.

The Archers improved to 4-0 while the Warriors climbed to 5-0.

In other seniors encounter, Feati University downed Emilio Aguinaldo College, 83-77, for its fourth win in five games in Group C. *Inquirer Sports Staff*

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PETRON Fuel Success.

Task force tells baseball to shape up

By June Navarro

CAUTIOUS THAT BASEBALL'S DISASTROUS stint in the Asian Games might spill over in the Thailand Southeast Asian Games, the country's SEAG Task Force has urged baseball officials to draw up a surefire program that would prevent the debacle from happening again.

The task force, headed by wushu's Julian Camacho, said Philippine Amateur Baseball Association president Hector Navasero has vowed to submit a plan of action, including a team overhaul, to ensure SEAG victory in December.

Navasero's sluggers lost all their six games in the Doha Asiad last year, including a shameful defeat at the hands of the Thais, whom the Nationals had beaten in the 2005 SEAG held here.

"The task force doesn't want baseball to weigh down the other team sports' campaign in December," said task force deputy chair Mark Joseph.

During his meeting with task force officials, Navasero promised to hold tryouts, field a younger team by opening slots in the national pool for UAAP and NCAA stalwarts and recruit foreign baseball players with Filipino roots.

Navasero also pledged to crack down on smokers and drinkers in the national training pool and to widen the talent base for the sport by coordinating with various local baseball development associations.

The baseball czar for the past two decades, Navasero also vowed to resign and give way to younger leaders "probably after the SEA Games."

"We have reminded the officers and coaches that their performance in tournaments leading to the SEA Games will determine whether they will receive the task force's nod or not," said Joseph, also the deputy secretary general of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Xavier five tops tourney

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF XAVIER School (AAXS) affirmed its status as the most dominant team in the Chiang San Ching Memorial Cup, besting St. Stephen High School, 72-64, to rule the league's 10th edition and bag its fourth title Sunday at the Chang Kai Shek Gym in Manila.

Randy Chua, who made it to the Mythical Five, led the Caesar Wongchuking-mentored AAXS squad with 20 points while league Most Valuable Player Justin Qua added 16 points.

Wongchuking was adjudged best coach in the tournament for players 22 years and younger.

"We played bad early in the game but the boys showed great determination that's why we managed to pull through," said Wongchuking.

Wongchuking was adjudged best coach in the tournament for players 22 years old and below.

UAAP standouts Christopher Tiu and Woodward Co chipped in 11 points apiece for the victors.

Cycling tour shorter but meaner

BARNACHEA: Prohibitive favorite

ESPIRITU: Among the riders to watch

By Musong R. Castillo

CLOSE TO 1,500 KILOMETERS OF MOSTLY UPHILL TERRAIN AWAIT SANTY **Barnachea in his bid to repeat as champion when the 2007 Padyak Pinoy pedals off Thursday next week.**

Barnachea sets out as the prohibitive favorite in this summer's edition of the Tour, short by standards but more challenging compared with the one he conquered with ease last year.

A veteran of the 2006 Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, Barnachea sprang out of nowhere in the early stages last year, snatching the yellow jersey of leadership in the second stage and holding on for his breakthrough triumph.

He will have formidable foes to contend with, though, this year, including 1996 champion Victor Espiritu and 2003 winner Arnel Quirimit, who failed to buck a number of bad breaks last year to finish way out of the money.

Also seeking a repeat will be the Cossack Vodka squad, which rode perfectly in the crucial stages last year to pull the rug from under the more established favorites.

Renato Dolosa, a two-time winner of the fabled Marlboro Tour ng Pilipinas, has been prepping his squad in the mountains of Baguio as early as two months ago for their title defense.

Cossack, incidentally, is the only team that remained intact from last year, the others going through a major overhaul as agreed upon by organizers.

As champion, Cossack was able to retain the services of skipper Renato Sambrano, Michael Reyes, Roberto Torres, Nilo Jasul, Rookie of the Year Irish Valenzuela, Leonel Dimaano, Edgardo Ballezer and Elli Camarino.

The event will be flagged off with a prologue at the Mall of Asia on Thursday, a 3.2-kilometer ride along that sprawling structure on Diosdado Macapagal Avenue before the entourage treks to Cabanatuan City from Quezon City the following day.

The field then starts to grind it out—and paint a clearer picture of the Tour—when it journeys to Vigan City from Alaminos City on May 20, a 267-kilometer odyssey that treads to some undulating terrain.

Boys will be separated from the men on May 25, the eighth stage, when the field tackles the killer Baguio-to-Baguio stage which will take the cyclists from Burnham Park to Marcos Highway, up Naguilian road, down Marcos again and then up again via the devilish Kennon Road.

It will be a back-breaking 197-kilometer grind that, pundits and longtime Tour followers say, will all but decide this year's event.

The final stage, which is set May 27 at the Roxas Boulevard area, will be a 90-kilometer criterium race.

Ozamiz cagers down Davao in NBC thriller

STANDINGS	W	L
Iligan	6	0
Tagaytay	5	0
Valencia	5	3
Pagadian	5	4
Ozamiz	2	2
GenSan MP	2	4
Quezon	2	5
Davao	2	7
Iloilo	1	7

DAVAO CITY—DEFENDING champion Ozamiz Cotta came from behind to subdue Montaña Pawnshop-Davao, 79-76, Sunday in the 2007 Spring Cooking Oil-NBC National Cup basketball tournament at the Holy Cross College gym here.

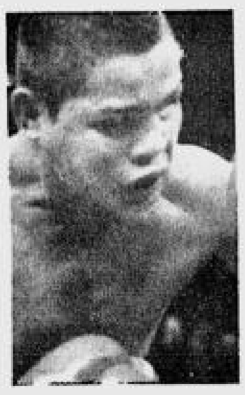
Gerry Cavan fired a conference-high 24 points on 5-of-8 shooting to propel Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog's Cotta Shrine cagers to their second victory in four games while dealing businessman Armando Quibod's Jewelers their seventh loss in nine outings.

Former MVP Christian Nicdao came up with his best game so far to help Ozamiz avert what could have been its third straight loss.

"All the teams want to beat us since we're the defending champion," said Ozamiz coach Albert Calvo. "We're still far from our usual form."

Ozamiz trailed 199-22 and 38-44 after 20 minutes but rallied in the third behind Cavan and Nicdao to pull ahead going into the payoff period.

Grand welcome readied for Bautista, Banal


BAUTISTA

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

LAS VEGAS—UNDEFEATED FILIPINO BOXERS Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista and AJ "Bazooka" Banal will be given a warm welcome when they arrive in the Philippines on Thursday morning.

The young ring phenoms will be accompanied by their chief handler, Antonio L. Aldeguer, as well as manager Michael Aldeguer and wife Christine, promoter Sammy Gello-ani and trainer Edito Villamor.

The 20-year-old Bautista posted a 12-round unanimous decision victory over erstwhile unbeaten Sergio Manuel Medina of Argentina to improve to 23-0 with 17 knockouts. The 18-year-old Banal, on the other hand, emerged victorious over Mexican Juan Alberto Rosas and climbed to 13-0 with 10 knockouts.

Bautista and Banal will take part in the noontime show "Wowowee" on Thursday and will face the media at the Cebu Marriott Hotel Friday.

Bautista will then fly to Tagbilaran City, where Mayor Dan Neri Lim will lead a red-carpet welcome for the native of Candijay, Bohol.

"I am just too happy to go back home," said Bautista in an interview at the Las Vegas residence of his cutman Tony Martin and wife Yvonee. "I miss my mother, father and siblings. I just want to rest."

Promoter Gello-ani said Bautista will headline the much-awaited "World Cup" of boxing sometime late August or early September against WBO superbantam king Daniel Ponce De Leon.

Adalem dark horse for key SBP position

GIVEN THE CHANCE, DR. ERNEST JAY ADALEM IS willing to do "the dirty work" for the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas.

The low-key president of the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities yesterday announced his platform as support poured in for his candidacy as SBP executive director.

Adalem pledges to strengthen the structures of the SBP, including clear-cut policies on referees which he said is crucial in making SBP a strong organization.

SBP president Manny V. Pangilinan has yet to announce his choice from among three candidates that also include Patrick Gregorio and Junjun Capistrano.

Mayweather-De La Hoya: And the loser is . . .

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

THE GOLDEN BOY CAME, SAW BUT HE DID not conquer.

Floyd Mayweather Jr. came, saw what was coming, and succeeded with a historic escape.

Oscar De La Hoya did not win.

But he hardly looked the loser.

Mayweather was officially declared winner.

But he hardly looked the deserving hero in the end.

***

It was anything but the big bout the world had eagerly awaited.

It was a cheap, unexpected ending to what had been hyped as the biggest, most expensive championship in boxing.

Great champs do come out of great battles.

Muhammad Ali assumed godly qualities after his Rumble in the Jungle with George Foreman in 1974.

So they spruced up the MGM Grand in Las Vegas over the weekend and the world, indeed, stood by for the elevation of a new prizefight god.

***

Sorry folks, better luck next time.

It's like this. Oscar De La Hoya did not win, but this hardly tarnished his stature.

Mayweather won but he can't be counted as supreme victor.

What that monumental clash in Las Vegas succeeded in confirming was the presence of a strange species among boxing champs.

Make way for Floyd Mayweather Jr.

He's sharp, quick, foxy.

He should also henceforth be known as the Magnificent Bore.

***

No, this should not be taken to mean Mayweather never injects excitement into a boxing bout.

He has the fluid moves, the smarts, the cat's quickness, and other enviable gifts.

He's a sight to behold, maybe poetry in motion to those who go only for cute moves inside the ring.

But what happened out there in the hallowed MGM arena on Saturday (Sunday in Manila) will not be remembered for any pure intensity or brilliance.

Take it from lawyer Rudy Salud, founding secretary general of the WBC, who said Mayweather's last outing did not deserve all the merits it received.

***

"The problem with Mayweather is that he fights only for himself, he does everything to win, without thinking of the fans and the sport itself," Salud explained.

But how could an unbeaten fighter, dubbed the world's best pound for pound, be made to assume the title Prince of Dullnes? Or Duke of the Impure?

Said Salud: "Yes, he always scores victories, but he often succeeds in turning great fights into forgettable contests."

Had he decided to fight the way champions should, Salud said, Mayweather would've readily turned his last fight into a truly pure and memorable one.

***

Of course, it goes without saying De La Hoya would've landed more solid blows and, maybe, scored a stoppage.

As the fleeting exchanges would bear it, Mayweather won by making De La Hoya miss more than half of the punches the Golden Boy had thrown.

That feat, indeed, had required great skills and inborn talent on the part of Mayweather.

But, mind you, it was not too different from skirting the issue in an intense, all-important debate.

Repeat: De La Hoya dropped his world 154-lb crown, but it's not right to say he had lost.

Mayweather remained unconquered, but it cannot be said he got the Golden Boy beaten.

The way he coolly dodge the issue in that physical debate, it could be said that Mayweather won by refusing to really fight.

That he happens to have the superior defensive skills should help make Mayweather a lead candidate as patron saint of prisoners perpetually plotting escape.

As Rudy Salud, who principally framed the WBC constitution and by-laws, would suggest, it would do boxing a lot of good if Mayweather finally makes good his threat to quit the ring.

SPORTSWATCH

Junior NBA program comes off wraps in RP

JUNIOR NBA, THE LEADING YOUTH BASKETBALL PROGRAM IN THE United States that serves youth basketball leagues through support programs for players, coaches, parents and officials, has been introduced in the Philippines. The Jr. NBA Philippines, with former Detroit Piston and Filipino basketball legend Norman Black as program director, will run from April 2 to June 6 with 16 schools from Metro Manila area participating. Students 9 to 14 years old can join the Jr. NBA, which is imbued with the prestige of the NBA. The program serves as a talent search for gifted children who can excel not only on the basketball court, but also in their schools and communities as well. "We are excited to team up with the program partners to bring Jr. NBA to the Philippines and help the development of youth basketball in the country," said Loron Orris, managing director of NBA Asia Limited.

Top US cockers eye World Slasher title

A FORMIDABLE GROUP OF UNITED STATES-BASED GAMEFOWL MASTER breeders is out to grab championship honors in the world's biggest cockfighting event, the World Slasher Cup Invitational 8-cock Derby, set May 22, 24 and 26 at the Araneta Coliseum. The bi-annual derby, sponsored by Thunderbird Powerfeeds, Sagupaan Complexor 3000 and Bacchus and hosted by Pintaksi of Champions, has drawn an American contingent headed by Roger Roberts of Georgia, the 2001 World Slasher Cup Champion, and Ray Alexander, the 1995 World Slasher Cup titlist. They are the biggest threat to the title defense of the Ampil and Bacud brothers. The other foreign cockers vying in the derby include Tom Cooper, Bobby Fairchild, Kyle and Bel Menatt, James Jones, Johnny Philips, Joe Stanfield, Richard Lainier, and Speedy Gonzales.

Firebird entry dominates PCAP derby

FIREBIRD JIMAFER BJ, A JOINT ENTRY OF HOTELIER-SPORTSMAN BIBOY Enriquez, Jet Fernando and Paul Dominguez, bagged the championship in the eighth leg of the Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) 5-Cock Derby Monday night at the Makati Coliseum. Using a selection of mountain-bred gamecocks trained by Enriquez, Firebird Jimafer BJ piled up five victories to win the title unscathed. According to Enriquez, the combination of two bullstags and three mature gamecocks did the trick, a game plan he employed in winning the Meralco Sabong For A Cause derby recently. "Matured gamecocks are always reliable in big derbies, but I occasionally use bullstags (11 to 12 months) since they move faster," Enriquez said. Firebird Jimafer BJ thus climbed to third place in the PCAP Cocker of the Year race with 25.5 points.

Big Makati 5-cocker gets under way

BIGTIME COCKFIGHTING RESUMES AT THE MAKATI COLISEUM TONIGHT as the PSOSEC Class '64 5-Cock Derby fires off at 6 p.m. featuring some 50 matches sponsored by Gran Matador and B- Meg Derby Ace. The derby stakes P700,000 in guaranteed prizes. Meanwhile, the ninth leg of the PCAP derby series, originally scheduled on May 21, will instead will be held this Saturday. Official entries with weight limits of 1.8 kgs. to 2.4 kgs. must be submitted on Friday. The 2007 Makati Invitational 8-Cock Derby sizzles on May 28, 30 and June 1.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Angie Red/Run Like D'Wind (6), Strong Boy (4), Mes Monique (2), EJ Forever (7)

Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Air D'Truth (1), Urband Legend (6), Merlot (7), Sister Moon (8), Might Of The Wind (5)

Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Grand Fiesta (7), GI Speedball (3), Sharp Cookie (1), Sir Henry (8)

Race 4—(Iverson (4), Boss lady (6), Calvin's Magic (2), Princess Sophia (5), Lonmg Mitter (7), Sweet Peanut (1)

Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Playmaker (6), La Signonna (9), Coeur D'Honneur (7), Step On The Gas (2), Ideal Gaze (1)

Race 6—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Dulce My Love (2), Sandok (3), Beautiful Jaeda (7), Loaded (10), Ambot Sa Imo (1), Firehouse (6)

Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—C Tonet (9), Mister Cool (1), Ocean Cookie (5), Dazzling Affair (4), Brown Carpet (6)

Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Material Ruler (9), Tellmenolies (2), Formidable Ella (4), Manila Magic (7), Angie Gray (8), Farragut's Order (5)

Fiery Marcelo snatches 3rd straight win

CARMONA, CAVITE—JEAN STEFANO MARcelo of Marcelo Racing recovered from a bad start to thwart favored rivals and snatch his third straight win Sunday in the third leg of the 2007 Shell Helix Karting Super Series at the Carmona Circuit Philippines here.

Bad kart set-up and the unexpected downpour left the 16-year-old Marcelo struggling in Race 1 on Saturday where he finished fourth behind Alessandra Racing's defending champion Matteo Guidicelli and Mark Bumgarner.

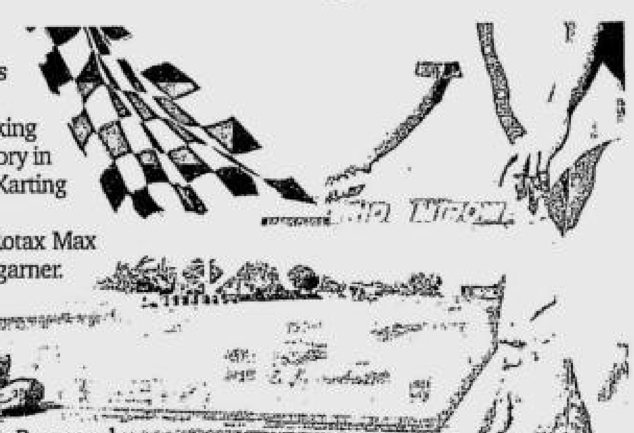
But, after fixing his kart, Marcelo dominated the last two races to rule the premiere Formula 125 Open class. He posted the fastest lap time of 44.393 seconds to pip Guidicelli and Bumgarner in Race 2 and claim the pole for the final race.

Marcelo finished the final 20-lap race in 14:55.198, 4.032 seconds ahead of Guidicelli.

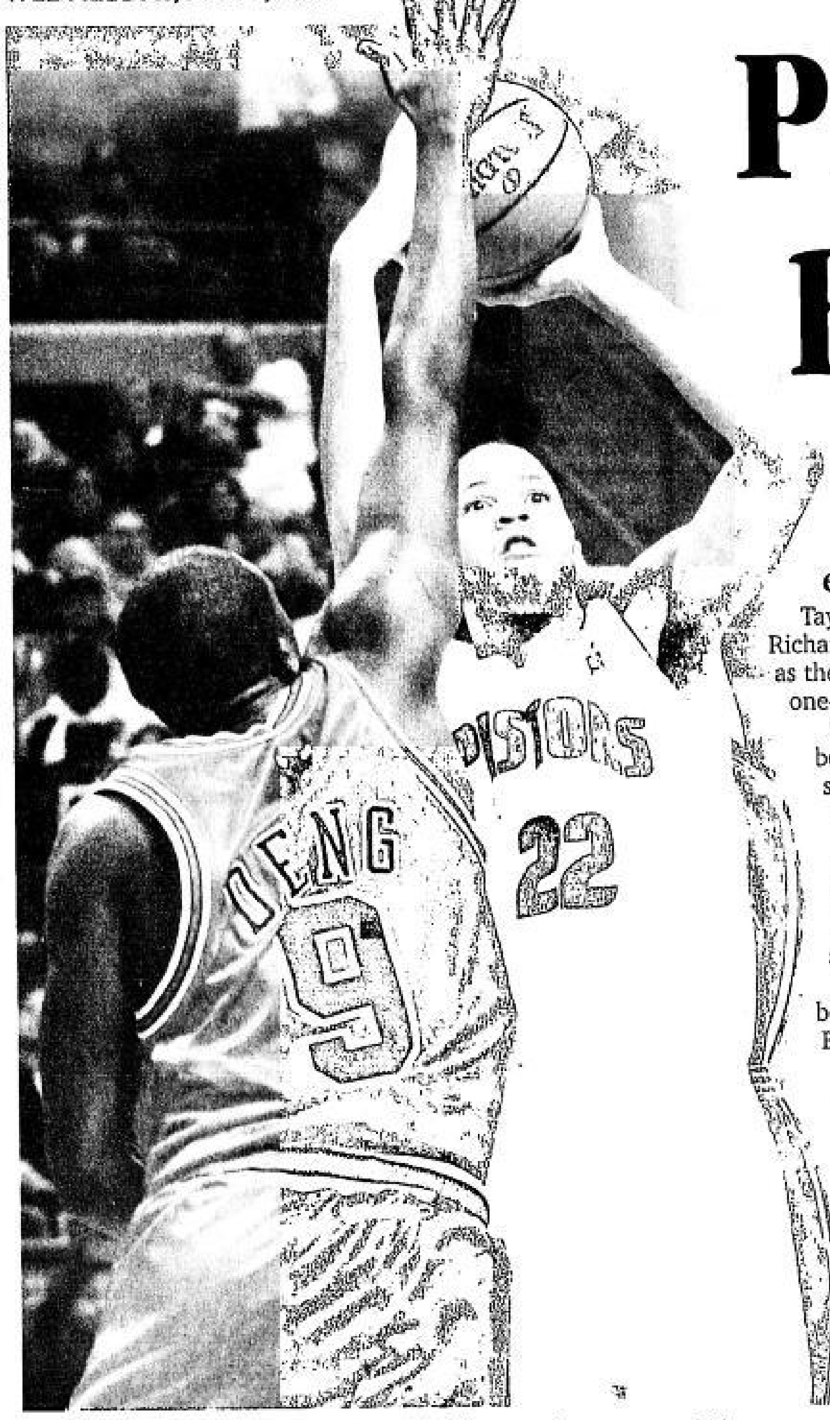
Ken Monzones finished third, checking in 6.902 seconds behind to clinch victory in the ROK Senior division over 02Karting teammate Mike Casimiro.

Guidicelli bagged the title in the Rotax Max Seniors class over Domingo and Bumgarner.

Winning the other titles in this event sanctioned by the Automobile Association Philippines were Jet Racing's Vencer John Suba, Francis Reyes and Ecuadorian expatriate Santiago Garcia.


MARCELO takes the checkered flag in Race 2.

Pistons flatten Bulls; Jazz up



DETROIT forward Tayshaun Prince (right) pops a jumper over Chicago wingman Luol Deng in the second half of their Game Two matchup. REUTERS

DETROIT—THE DETROIT PISTONS' OVERPOWERING scoring and strong defense lifted them to a crushing 108-87 win over the Chicago Bulls and a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference semifinal series on Monday.

Tayshaun Prince scored 25 points, Richard Hamilton 24 and Chris Webber 22 as the Pistons posted their second straight one-sided win.

"Our mind frame was to come out and be aggressive defensively and offensively and just try to impose our will on them," Webber told reporters.

That the Pistons did, scoring 34 points in the first quarter to take a 16-point lead on 63.6 per cent shooting. The advantage increased to 24 in the second quarter.

"The thing that's most surprising is both games haven't been competitive," Bulls coach Scott Skiles told reporters.

"Both times from the jump ball, they've owned us all over the floor."

The victory was the sixth straight in the playoffs for the Pistons, who swept the Orlando Magic in four games in their opening series.

"I've seen an intensity in the locker room that is higher than I ever expected," Webber said. "And I see it becoming more intense every game. We want this."

Tyrus Thomas topped the Bulls with 18 points, 12 coming in the fourth quarter, and Luol Deng added 16.

Game Three of the best-of-seven series is in Chicago on Thursday.

Meanwhile, Carlos Boozer broke a tie with 17 seconds remaining as the Utah Jazz turned back the visiting Golden State Warriors 116-112 in the opening game of their Western Conference semifinal series.

Boozer, who had 17 points and 20 rebounds, put the Jazz in front 114-112 with his put-back shot, and the Warriors did not answer.

Two free throws by the Jazz's Matt Harpring closed out the scoring.

Deron Williams led Utah with 31 points. Harping and Mehmet Okur added 21 each.

Baron Davis paced the Warriors with 24 points. Jason Richardson and Al Harrington had 21 each and Matt Barnes scored 20.

The Jazz are in the second round for the first time since 2000. Only guard Derek Fisher, who was traded from the Warriors to Utah last summer, and Okur have been this far in the postseason before.

But Utah had less than two days to prepare heading into the series opener after eliminating the Rockets on Saturday night. The Warriors, on the other hand, were well rested and ready to run once again after finishing off a stunning win over Western Conference top seeds Dallas on Thursday.

Game Two is in Salt Lake City on Wednesday.

Reuters

GAME TODAY (Basketball TV)
10:30 a.m.—San Antonio vs Phoenix

Ex-champ Corrales dies in road mishap

LONDON—FORMER WBC AND WBO lightweight champion Diego Corrales has died after a motorcycle accident in Las Vegas, US media reported on Tuesday.

CORRALES AP

The 29-year-old American, who also won a world title at super featherweight, was reported to have collided with a car at high speed 10 miles west of Las Vegas late on Monday.

His gruelling victory over Jose Luis Castillo in 2005, in which he was knocked down twice before gaining a 10th-round stoppage, was voted by The Boxing Writers Association of America as the fight of the year.

Corrales, who lost to Castillo five months later in a re-match posted 40 victories in his career with just five losss. His last fight ended in defeat in April this year when he was beaten by Joshua Clottey after moving up to welterweight. *Reuters*

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Basso admits Spain doping scandal role

ROME—GIRO D'ITALIA CHAMPION IVAN Basso became the highest-profile cyclist to admit he was involved in the Spanish doping scandal.

Following charges of using or attempting to use a banned substance by the Italian Olympic Committee's doping commission, Basso asked to talk to CONI's anti-doping prosecutor and "widely acknowledged his responsibilities" in connection with Operation Puerto and offered "full cooperation," CONI said on Monday.

The Italian cyclist's lawyer, Massimo Martelli, said Basso decided to "spill the beans because it was not possible for him to live out his passion, his work, cycling, in this way."

Basso could face a lengthy suspension, and might be stripped of the Giro title he won't be defending.

Basso's name turned up on a list of cyclists who allegedly had contact with a Spanish doctor accused of running a blood-doping clinic in Madrid.

Martelli said Basso told the prosecutor about the "methods with which this activity was carried out." He said he could not disclose the exact contents of the meeting because the transcript was sealed.

"Basso said, 'The moment has come for me to assume my responsibilities. I only hope that I will be understood,'" Martelli said, adding the rider would "plan his future around the fight against doping." *AP*

Federer, Nadal take rivalry to tennis doubles

ROME—THEY'VE MET ON CLAY, GRASS AND hard courts, and even in a half-grass, half-clay court exhibition last week.

On Monday, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal played another type of game—doubles.

NADAL AFP

Nadal teamed with Carlos Moya to beat Federer and his Davis Cup teammate Stanislas Wawrinka 6-4, 7-6 (5) in the first round of the Rome Masters.

"I'm getting to know him pretty well," Federer said. "It was fun."

In singles, Nadal holds a 7-3 career edge over Federer and has won all five matches on clay. Nadal also won his only previous meeting with Federer in doubles, teaming with Tommy Robredo to beat Federer and Yves Allegro at the 2004 Indian Wells Masters.

Nadal wasn't reading anything into the latest victory over his rival.

"We're in the second round in doubles, that's it," Nadal said. "Doubles is not the same tension as singles. But it's good practice for singles. It's a good start for singles." *AP*

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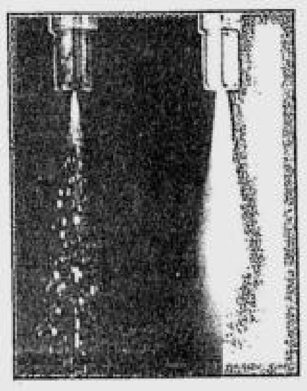

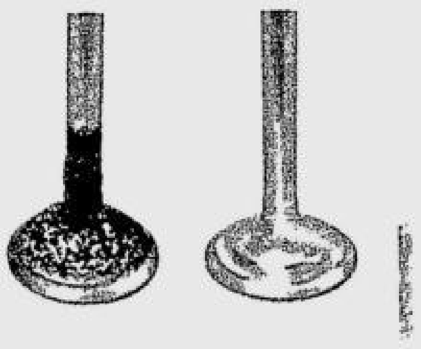

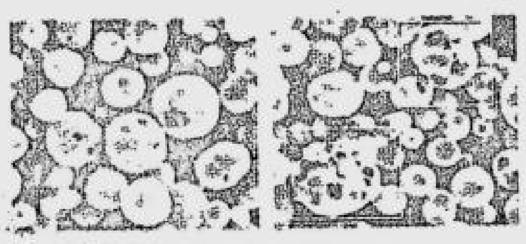

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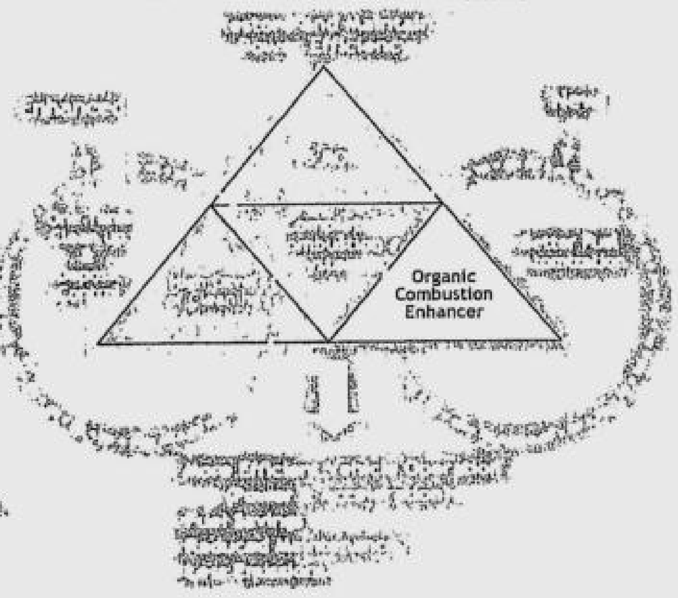
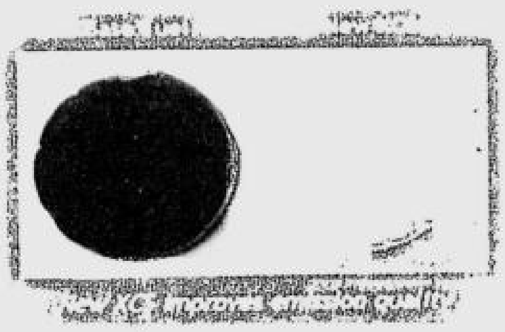
How new Petron XCS works





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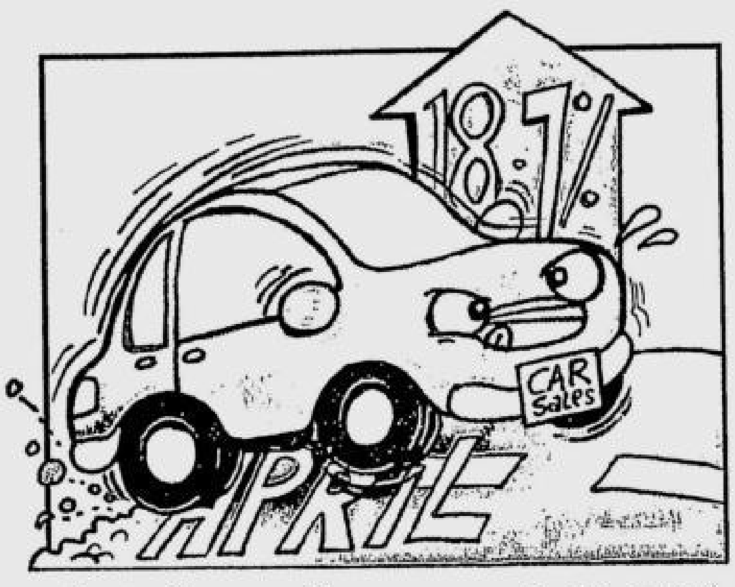
SMC to list beer, packaging units



Vehicle sales up 18.7% in first four months

By Ronnel W. Domingo

VEHICLE SALES IN THE FIRST four months maintained a growth rate of 18.7 percent despite a slowdown in April compared to the previous month.

Elizabeth H. Lee, president of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers Association of the Philippines (Campi), said industry sales were on track to the target of hurdling the 100,000-unit mark in 2007 "assuming continued implementation" of the used car import ban along with the strong peso.

"April sales (compare to March) showed a decline of 15 percent mainly because of fewer selling days due to the Lent," Lee said. Sales month-on-month is expected to pick up again in May.

In a joint report with the Truck

VEHICLE/ B3

Hikes capital, OKs partnership with Kirin

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

SAN MIGUEL CORP., SOUTHEAST ASIA'S BIGGEST FOOD AND beverage company, is spinning off its beer and packaging units for eventual listing on the stock exchange.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, SMC said it would put its beer operations under San Miguel Beer Domestic, which will become a wholly owned subsidiary of the country's biggest conglomerate.

To further sweeten the proposed offering, SMC also sought board approval for its beer business to enter into a strategic partnership with Kirin Brewery Co. Ltd. A strategic investor of San Miguel since 2002, Kirin has a 20-percent stake in the SMC.

Sources said that San Miguel Packaging Specialists Inc. (SMPSI), formerly San Miguel Packaging and the umbrella firm for the company's packaging interests here and abroad, would also be going public.

Last month, SMC signed an agreement with longtime joint venture partner Nihon Yamamura Glass for the latter's 35-percent equity infusion in SMPSI.

"We believe that stand-alone domestic brewing and packaging operations will enhance our companies' ability to compete more effectively in their industries. An IPO (initial public offer) would raise for each business much needed equity and allow it to grow faster and partner more effectively with other

SMC/ B2

IN THIS ISSUE

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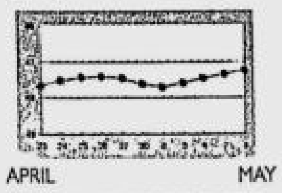
▨ GSIS willing to condone P3.5-B debt of gov't /B8

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



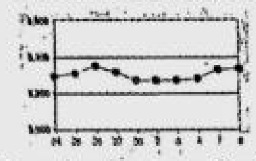
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 47.26 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., May 8, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



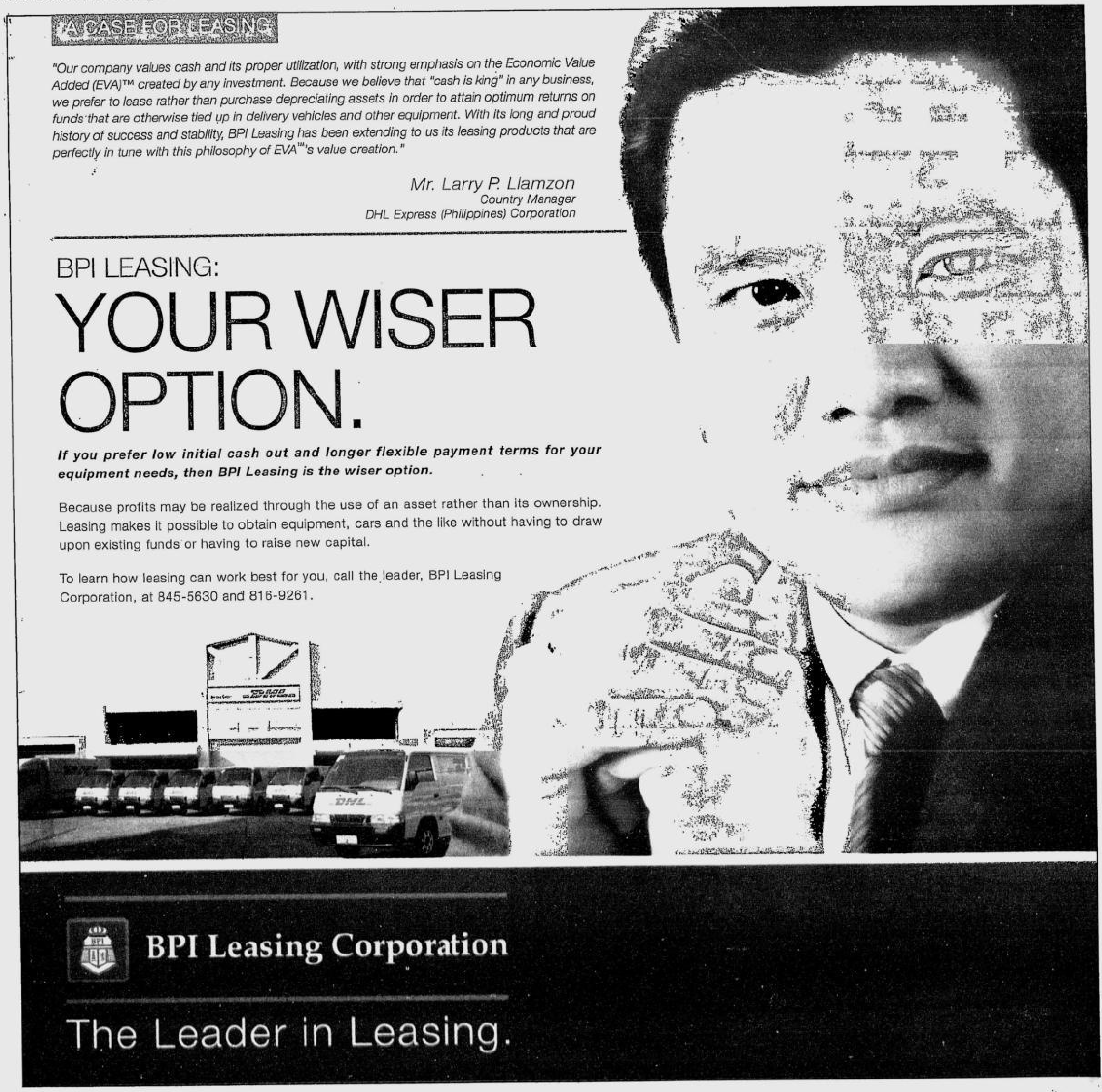
(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close slightly higher

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.12-PERCENT higher yesterday aided by a rise on Wall Street overnight which extended its record run to five days amid frenzied takeover activity, dealers said.

They said the composite index also breached the 3,325-point resistance level as some investors took their cue from the Dow Jones bull run.

SHARES/ B2



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Chevron sells Caltex LPG business in RP to Petron

CHEVRON PHILIPPINES INC. YESterday announced that it had divested its liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) retail business unit to publicly listed Petron Corp.

The divestment to Petron covers Chevron's Caltex LPG-branded dealerships, branded refillers, various equipment on loan, LPG cylinders and the use of the "Caltex LPG" brand for a two-year period.

Randy Johnson, Chevron country chair for the Philippines and CPI general manager for retail, said the American firm considered several options prior to the divestment.

"The local LPG business underwent evaluation for better alignment with Chevron's global business portfolio," he said.

Chevron said in a statement that the divestment of its LPG retail business, which serves mostly household consumers, is part of a larger strategy to focus on its core business of marketing and distributing Caltex-branded motor fuels and lubricant products to retail and commercial customers.

The deal with Petron was made on the basis of a commitment to sell the dealership network to a reliable and reputable LPG supplier, it added.

The statement added that Chevron's dealer network was being transferred essentially intact to Petron and the transaction was expected to have no effect on the supply of LPG nationwide.

"We are confident that Petron will provide the same level of service and product quality to our customers," Johnson said.

Over the next few months, Petron will integrate Chevron's dealers into its nationwide LPG network. The company will likewise convert and rebrand Caltex LPG cylinders to Gasul cylinders over a two-year period.

SMC to list beer, packaging units

From page B1

world class players like Kirin and Nihon Yamamura Glass," said San Miguel president Ramon Ang.

However, details of the IPO were not yet available.

"This will provide both the beer and packaging business the financial flexibility and operating muscle that will boost operations moving forward. We are looking to unlock the potential and underlying value of the entire San Miguel Group. This is something we have been looking at for some time now and with this spin-off, we reach another milestone in our long-range plan to transform San Miguel into a more disciplined, high-performing company," Ang said.

SMC chair Eduardo M. Cojuangco Jr. said the plan would enhance more value for San Miguel shareholders.

"We are excited about our plans for driving San Miguel's long-term growth in our core and new businesses through our strategy of portfolio transformation," Cojuangco said.

In line with SMC's plan to expand its businesses through acquisitions, pay down debt and finance share buybacks, the company said it would increase its authorized capital to 7.5 billions shares from 4.5 billion shares.

This will enable the company to issue 1.5 billion preferred shares as part of a proposed capital raising exercise.

In 2005, San Miguel sought a waiver from the shareholders' preemptive rights on the "issuance of any class of preferred shares related to equity-linked or other securities, for property needed for corporate purposes."

SMC is raising capital to finance its diversification into noncore businesses such as power, mining, infrastructure, water and other utilities.

Giving it financial muscle to support this ambitious roadmap, SMC said it sustained its 2006 pace of growth in the first quarter of 2007.

With the sale of its stake in Coca Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. to Atlanta's The Coca Cola Co., SMC's consolidated net income in the first quarter of 2007 reached P4.33 billion, double that of the same period last year.

Consolidated operating income of P3.8 billion was 24 percent lower than last year as external factors continued to affect the performance of Ginebra San Miguel Inc.

Operating income from local beer operations reached P2.7 billion, 13-percent higher than last year as the business benefited from lower raw material and fuel prices.

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intel Centrino Duo
Core 2 Duo inside

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 8, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	13	13	12.25	12.5	65,500
73	42.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	68.5	69.5	67.5	67.5	2,173,300
65.5	30.5	Banco de Oro Universal Bank	59	61	59	60	1,858,300
935	630	China Banking Corp.	900	910	900	900	300
20	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	300
119	60	Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	103	108	103	105	245,570
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.53	0.55	0.53	0.54	3,680,000
68.5	29	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	61	61.5	61	61.5	3,186,000
55	30.5	Philippine National Bank	46	46	46	46	62,200
68	38.5	Philippine Savings Bank	63	64	63	63	6,900
39.57	13.04	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	28	29	28	28.5	4,045,000
90	41	Security Bank Corp.	88	88	86	86	68,300
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
3.81	1.72	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	3	3	3	3	70,000
7.7	1.5	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.7	524,000
39	27	First Metro Investment Corp.	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	10,000
2,000.00	1,500.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,645.00	1,650.00	1,645.00	1,650.00	480
5	4.16	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.4	4.55	4.4	4.5	25,895,000
2.22	0.97	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.18	2.2	2.16	2.2	576,000
1,005.00	200	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc	580	600	570	570	3,860
2,250.00	1,895.00	Sun Life Financial Inc	2,110.00	2,110.00	2,110.00	2,110.00	330
1.94	1.02	Vantage Corp.	1.94	1.94	1.88	1.9	5,952,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
0.37	0.16	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	170,000
62.5	41	First Gen Corp.	59	59	58.5	59	2,029,800
82.5	40.5	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	78.5	78.5	75	75	821,700
12.75	6.6	Manila Water Co. Inc.	12.25	12.25	12	12	5,086,200
81	13	Manila Electric Co. "A"	80	80	78.5	78.5	286,400
82	20.25	Manila Electric Co. "B"	80.5	80.5	79	79	2,966,800
6.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	25,452,000
5.7	3.35	Petron Corp.	5.3	5.4	5.2	5.2	2,640,000
2.2	1.6	Salcon Power Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	20,000
5	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	4.8	4.95	4.8	4.9	1,136,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.16	2.16	2.12	2.16	215,000
3.4	1.24	CADP Group Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	17,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	15,000
61	30	Jollibee Foods Corp.	55	55	54	54	466,000
1.62	0.69	RFM Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	41,000
4.05	2.34	Roxas Holdings	2.44	2.48	2.44	2.48	360,000
67.5	61	San Miguel Corp. "A"	64.5	64.5	64.5	64.5	98,400
84	68	San Miguel Corp. "B"	73.5	75	73	75	163,100
0.51	0.19	Swift Foods Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	400,000
24	15.75	Universal Robina Corp.	16.25	16.5	16	16.25	3,960,600
		CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
5.17	1.07	EEI Corp.	4.7	4.85	4.7	4.8	2,777,000
9.1	4.2	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.8	9.1	8.8	9.1	1,136,000
7.5	2.04	Philippine National Const. Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	10,000
2	0.245	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.8	1.74	1.78	10,676,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	1.42	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	6	6.3	6	6.1	13,173,000
0.95	0.185	Metro Alliance Hold'gs and Eqts. "A"	0.74	0.74	0.7	0.7	110,000
0.99	0.25	Metro Alliance Hold'gs and Eqts. "B"	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	50,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.11	0.06	[illegible]	0.27	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
		HOLDING FIRMS					
4.05	1.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	21,000
0.0925	0.022	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.0675	0.0675	0.0675	0.0675	10,000,000
0.59	0.17	APC Group Inc.	0.54	0.56	0.54	0.55	19,800,000
0.018	0.006	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	547,500,000
0.019	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	23,000,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	8.9	9.1	8.9	8.9	3,402,000
0.016	0.0065	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	100,500,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.6	6.6	4,329,000
1.04	0.45	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	50,000
2.24	0.83	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.12	2.18	2.12	2.14	6,227,000
680	327.5	Ayala Corp.	600	600	595	595	216,580
14	7.92	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.5	121,200
6.9	0.7	Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	199,000
4.45	0.97	Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.9	3.95	3.85	3.9	30,284,000
8.2	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.7	8.2	7.7	8.2	9,315,000
1.3	0.7	F and J Prince Holdings Corp. "A"	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	20,000
6	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.2	5.2	5	5.1	359,000
0.42	0.13	Forum Pacific Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	180,000
14.5	5.3	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	12	12.25	12	12.25	22,500
12.5	0.88	Magnum Holdings Inc.	11.75	12	11.25	11.5	701,500
3.95	0.19	Multitech Investments Corp.	3.7	3.95	3.7	3.75	11,060,000
5.4	1.06	PAL Holdings Inc.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	12,000
1.26	0.8	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	10,000
0.48	0.155	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.42	0.44	23,940,000
1.7	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	22,000
407.5	205	SM Investments Corp.	367.5	377.5	367.5	370	261,440
2.2	0.6	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.5	1.7	1.5	1.7	6,000
0.51	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.35	0.37	39,360,000
1.34	0.68	South China Resources Inc.	1.2	1.24	1.2	1.22	109,000
0.41	0.05	Uniloil Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	4,850,000
1.3	0.78	Vivant Corp	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	3,000
0.24	0.08	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.165	560,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.75	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.42	757,000
0.58	0.3	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	50,000
18.5	10.25	Ayala Land Inc.	18	18.5	18	18.25	11,674,900
1.72	0.95	Belle Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.32	1.34	4,428,000
3.1	1.18	C and P Homes Inc.	2.46	2.55	2.4	2.55	1,289,000
4.5	1.8	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.45	4.3	4.45	73,000
2	1	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp. "A"	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	352,000
2.1	1	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp. "B"	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	410,000
0.54	0.165	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.49	0.51	27,130,000
3.1	0.64	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	3	3.05	2.9	2.9	1,451,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.79	0.79	5,770,000
0.165	0.027	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.14	0.14	4,650,000
2.04	0.93	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.76	1.76	65,379,000
3.35	2.04	Highlands Prime Inc.	2.55	2.6	2.55	2.6	13,000
0.016	0.0038	Interport Resources Corp. "A"	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	3,300,000
0.016	0.005	Interport Resources Corp. "B"	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	31,000,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	1,800,000
0.99	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.71	0.72	1,550,000
0.034	0.011	Marsteel Consolidated Inc. "A"	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	400,000
3.95	1.26	Megaworld Corp.	3.6	3.7	3.45	3.5	75,355,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.55	4.65	4.55	4.6	283,000
0.26	0.1	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
0.87	0.25	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	440,000
3.5	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	2.55	2.6	2.55	2.6	69,000
23	9.6	Robinson Land Corp.	17.5	17.75	17.5	17.75	5,335,200
5.9	1.48	SM Development Corp.	5.6	5.9	5.6	5.8	5,580,000
13	6.9	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.75	9,889,600
0.27	[illegible]	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.19	0.19	[illegible]
		MEDIA					
30.5	13.5	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	30.5	30.5	30	30.5	286,200
1.2	0.97	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	50,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.68	1.7	1.68	1.7	4,315,000
1,445.00	820	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,250.00	1,295.00	1,250.00	1,290.00	216,350
2,820.00	1,700.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,570.00	2,570.00	2,550.00	2,550.00	255,950
7.9	3.1	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.8	7	6.8	7	4,371,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.155	Boulevard Holdings Inc	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	2,210,000
8	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	7.4	8	7.4	7.9	919,000
7.6	2	IPVG Corp.	7.3	7.3	7	7	1,240,000
0.075	0.046	ISM Communications Corp.	0.06	0.0625	0.06	0.0625	500,000
0.06	0.025	PhilWeb Com Inc.	0.046	0.046	0.045	0.046	42,600,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	5,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.88	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	200,000
6.8	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	6.4	6.6	6.4	6.5	774,000
32	12.5	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	27	27	26.5	27	961,500
2.14	0.86	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2.12	2.14	1.98	2	904,000
1.74	0.8	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.16	1.24	1.16	1.24	15,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	4	4.05	3.95	4	41,163,000
0.45	0.18	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	800,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.98	1	0.98	0.98	630,000
		EDUCATION					
966.67	653.33	Far Eastern University Inc.	800	800	800	800	390
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	[illegible]
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
22	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc	7.5	8.6	7.5	8.6	30,000
4.35	1.84	Macroasia Corp.	3.95	4	3.85	3.95	2,444,000
16	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp	14	14.25	14	14.25	945,600
30	9.5	Paxys Inc	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	3,410,800
		MINING					
0.018	0.007	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.012	78,600,000
7.6	2.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6	6.2	6	6.2	1,211,000
7.7	2.55	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.3	758,000
18.5	5.6	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	17.75	18.25	17.75	18.25	4,026,300
14.75	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	12	12.5	12	12.5	193,800
2.12	0.0602	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	2.04	2.12	2.04	2.1	48,585,000
0.42	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	34,650,000
0.47	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	1,170,000
0.037	0.0154	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.034	0.035	0.034	0.034	213,600,000
0.039	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.036	0.036	0.036	0.036	37,300,000
0.024	0.0075	Omico Corp.	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	430,800,000
5.9	2.65	Philex Mining Corp.	5.2	5.4	5.1	5.1	14,045,000
32	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	27.5	28	27.5	28	380,700
0.87	0.25	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.75	0.76	0.75	0.75	400,000
1.8	0.41	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.36	1.4	15,025,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.23	Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.36	0.38	14,460,000
0.017	0.008	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.016	0.017	0.016	0.016	30,400,000
0.019	0.009	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.017	0.018	0.017	0.018	163,600,000
14.81	8.27	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10	10	10	10	27,000
0.0182	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.015	183,100,000

BY INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK

CURRENCIES

May 8, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.735078	1.000000	47.3710
Japan	Yen	0.006122	0.008328	0.3945
United Kingdom	Pound	1.464937	1.992900	94.4057
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.094020	0.127905	6.0590
Switzerland	Franc	0.607001	0.825764	39.1173
Canada	Dollar	0.667221	0.907688	42.9981
Singapore	Dollar	0.485424	0.660371	31.2824
Australia	Dollar	0.606150	0.824606	39.0624
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.949964	2.652731	125.6625
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.196016	0.266660	12.6320
Brunei	Dollar	0.483827	0.658198	31.1795
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000113	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.022660	0.030826	1.4603
UAE	Dirham	0.200212	0.272368	12.9023
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.360400	64.4435
Korea	Won	0.000797	0.001084	0.0514
China	Yuan**	0.095416	0.129804	6.1489
Argentina	Peso	0.238661	0.324675	15.3802
Brazil	Real	0.363073	0.493925	23.3977
Denmark	Kroner	0.134229	0.182605	8.6502
India	Rupee	0.018137	0.024673	1.1688
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215313	0.292912	13.8755
Mexico	New Peso	0.067848	0.092300	4.3723
New Zealand	Dollar	0.542213	0.737626	34.9421
South Africa	Rand	0.106899	0.145425	6.8889
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022129	0.030104	1.4261

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—May 7, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.

** Asian time closing rate as of April 30, 2007

Shares close slightly higher

From page B1

The composite index edged up 4.06 points to settle at 3,333.95. It moved between 3,329.89 and 3.357.88. The broader all-share index rose 9.55 points to 2,121.04.

Gainers beat losers 60 to 44, while 57 stocks were unchanged. A total of 2.6 billion shares worth P4.7 billion were traded.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average crossed 13,300 for the first time on Monday, securing its 20th record close since the start of the year.

Other investors meanwhile were cautious ahead of the May 14 midterm elections.

"We have to confirm in the next few sessions if that level can hold. If it does, the next resistance would be 3,400," said Gomer Tan of Regina Capital Development Corp.

Tan said while market sentiment was bullish in general, investors would likely continue to be guarded ahead of next Monday's congressional and local elections. *AFP*

SM Prime posts ₱1.5-B income in Q1, up 11%

HANS Sy

MALL BUILDER SM PRIME Holdings Inc. said its net income rose 11 percent to P1.5 billion in the first quarter of 2007 driven by rental revenues from new mall openings.

Gross revenues for the period grew 24 percent to P3.6 billion with the operation of five new malls last year, including the group's giant mall, SM Mall of Asia, which opened in May last year.

The other malls that opened last year were in Sta. Rosa in Laguna, Clark in Pampanga province, SM Supercenter Pasig and SM City Lipa in Batangas.

For the first quarter, rental revenues from the malls, which accounted for 83 percent of total revenues, grew 26 percent to P3 billion.

Currently, these new malls have an average occupancy level of 97 percent. Same store rental growth was at 7 percent.

Cinema ticket sales grew 19 percent to P429 million, as more cinemas opened, supported by both domestic and international blockbuster films such as "Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo," "Ghost Rider," "300," "Night at the Museum" and "Agent X44."

Pushed up by aggressive mall openings last year, operating expenses increased to P1.6 billion. Despite this, operating income grew by 17 percent to P2 billion during the period.

This year, SM Prime opened SM City Bacolod last March bringing total gross floor area to 3.6 million sq. m.

SM Prime also opened last week the Annex of SM City Cebu, which increased its gross floor area by 66 percent or 107,049 sq. m.

The Cebu mall now has a total 268,611 sq. m., making it the fourth largest mall of SM Prime and the largest in the Visayan region.

"SM Prime will continue to reap the benefits of its continued expansion this year and in many years to come. Because of this, SM Prime offers stability, innovative service and a strong track record that has built a strong brand franchise for the Filipino community. Expect more to come from us as we carry out our goal of bringing more SM malls to provincial communities and expand some of our existing malls that have naturally grown and evolved with its markets," SM Prime president Hans T. Sy said.

Other malls scheduled to open in 2007 are SM City Taytay and SM Supercenter Muntinlupa.

Ongoing expansion of existing malls are also underway.

This includes the Science Discovery Center in the Mall of Asia and SM City Pampanga.

Alaska sees revenues hitting ₱9B in '07 with new brands

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

ALASKA MILK CORP. SEES SALES GROWING to P9 billion this year from P6 billion in 2006 due to the acquisition of new brands from Nestle S.A.

Alaska Milk recently bought three Philippine-registered liquid milk trademarks—"Alpine," "Liberty" and "Krem-top" from Swiss company Societe des Produits Nestle S.A. (SPN).

Alaska president Wilfred Steven Uytengsu Jr. said following the company's stockholder's meeting yesterday that the purchase of the strong brands would grow Alaska's business over the long term.

Alaska had also been granted the license by SPN to import, manufacture, distribute and sell in the Philippines, two other liquid milk product brands using the cooking milk brand "Carnation" and sweetened condensed milk brand, "Milkmaid."

Alpine, Liberty and Milkmaid are touted as strong brands in Visayas and Mindanao while Carnation has a strong base in the Northern Luzon market.

Krem-Top, meanwhile, has an established record in the food service category.

"This initiative will allow us to pursue long-term growth. This transaction alone will add about P3 billion in annual revenues to our business while providing the company with established brands that mirror our corporate strategy in growing the milk category," Uytengsu told shareholders.

The agreement to buy these brands was sealed last April and Uytengsu expects these brands to pitch in P2 billion in total revenues for this year alone.

Nevertheless, Alaska is not shrugging off the impact of cost pressures this year on its earnings with the rise in prices of skim milk powder.

"Prices have averaged $2,100 a ton and now they are up at $4,500 a ton," Uytengsu said.

The spike was due to the global shortage of milk powder, coupled with with strong demand in Asia.

For the first quarter, Alaska said revenues grew 33 percent to P1.67 billion from P1.26 billion in the same period last year.

This is due to higher sales volumes and an average 5 percent increase in selling prices in line with industry increases for selected products like powdered milk and sweetened condensed milk.

Vehicle sales up 18.7% ...

From page B1

Manufacturers Association, Campi said the two groups sold a total of 34,829 units as of end-April compared to 29,331 units in the year-ago period.

The volume sold from January to April account for 33.8 percent of the full-year target of 103,000 units.

"(Four-month) sales figures show that turnover of commercial vehicle grew 23.2 percent so far while that of passenger cars grew 11.2 percent," the report said.

"Positive sales growth on the average should be seen in the coming months," it said. "The recent introduction of several new models will sustain retail sales while fleet sales deliveries are seen to continue in May."

The commercial vehicle segment, which includes the subcategories of Asian utility vehicles, light commercial vehicles, light trucks, and trucks and buses, accounted for 65 percent of aggregate sales.

All four subcategories showed improvements with sales of AUVs going up 33.4 percent to 9,839 units and of light commercial vehicles—consisting of pickups, vans, compact sports utility vehicles—by 14.5 percent to 11,968 units.

The assemblers sold 617 units of light trucks or 43.5 percent higher while buyers took 287 units of trucks and buses or 59.4 percent better.

On the other hand, turnover of passenger cars increased to 12,118 units and positive growth is seen to continue with the introduction of new models in the coming months.

In terms of total sales, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. remained in the lead with 39.7 percent of the market. It sold 13,833 units or an increase of 19.8 percent.

Honda Cars Philippines Inc. kept second place with 14.8 percent of the market with sales reaching 5,167 units or 40.3 percent higher.

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. dropped to third place with 19.1 percent of the market, selling 4,315 units or an increase of 12.4 percent.

In the commercial vehicle segment, Toyota cornered 41.5 percent of the market; Mitsubishi grabbed 17.4 percent and Isuzu Philippines Corp. held 13 percent.

Toyota was also the top seller of cars, grabbing 36.3 percent of the market segment. Honda had 32.8 percent and Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc. held 8.4 percent.

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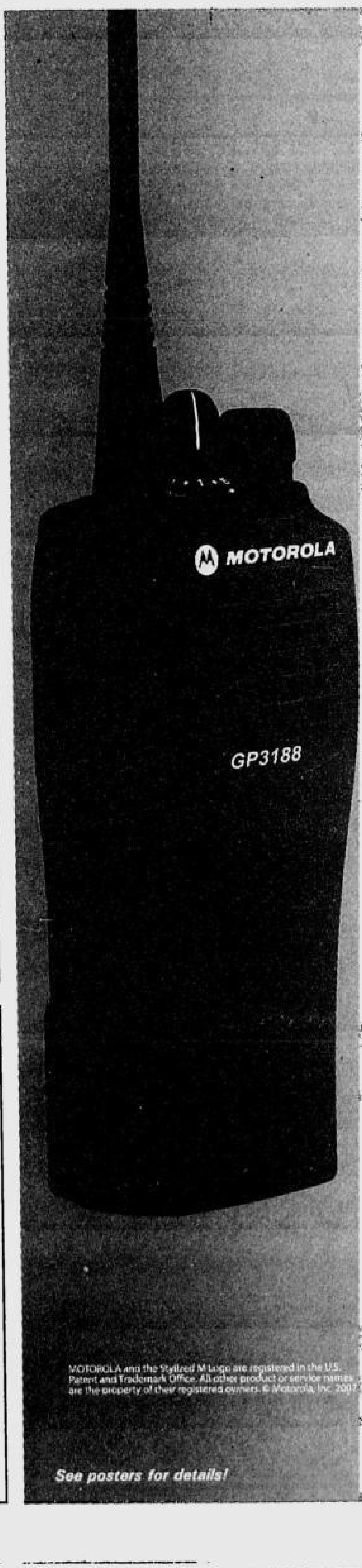

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PLDT group net income flat at ₱8.6B in Q1

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PHILIPPINE LONG DISTANCE TELEPHONE Co. yesterday said its consolidated net income for the first quarter was flat at P8.6 billion.

This, according to the company, was due to lower foreign exchange gains and higher corporate income taxes, which ate into earnings growth.

In a presentation to reporters yesterday at the company's headquarters in Makati City, PLDT president Napoleon Nazareno the company had raised its provision for taxes by P2.1 billion in the first quarter in view of the increase in the corporate income tax rate to 34 percent from 22 percent.

Foreign exchange gains in the first quarter this year dropped to P278 million from P1.6 billion in the same period last year due to the appreciation of the peso, which averaged at 48.50 to $1 from year-ago's 51 to $1.

Excluding foreign exchange gains and nonrecurring income, core net earnings in the first quarter grew 11 percent to P8.4 billion year-ago's P7.6 billion given higher revenues and lower interest expenses.

PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan said that at this income level, PLDT was confident it would achieve its core income target of P33 billion this year, up from P31.5 billion in 2006.

Consolidated service revenue from January to March rose 10 percent to P33 billion. This was despite a 5-percent appreciation in the peso which adversely affected the firm's dollar-linked businesses, which accounted for 35 percent of the PLDT Group's revenues. Revenues would have been up 12 percent had the peso remained stable, PLDT said.

Data, broadband and information and communications technology (ICT) revenue was up 21 percent to P16 billion in the first quarter of 2007. PLDT's ICT business includes Internet, Internet protocol-based and multimedia content services.

The 8-percent hike in cellular voice earnings had offset a 9-percent drop in traditional fixed-line voice revenue, resulting in a 1-percent rise in consolidated voice earnings.

Cash flow was robust at P17.5 billion in the first quarter despite higher capital spending, which hit P5.9 billion in the first three months.

The amount was used to roll out Next Generation Network (NGN) lines; raise cellular capacity; expand wireless broadband network, and boost international cable capacity. For the whole of 2007, PLDT earmarked P20-P22 billion for capital expenditure.

Also, the PLDT group is considering spending another $100 million for acquisitions in the business process outsourcing (BPO) sector, officials said. The group is also eyeing the possible purchase of small private telecommunication firms.

"We will continue to look at investment areas that can provide ways to expand growth. In the event such opportunities do not arise, we will consider the option of returning additional cash to our shareholders in the most efficient manner possible," Pangilinan said during the presentation.

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EKOM
AD

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. and some of the leading telecom companies in Asia spearhead the establishment of Asia-America Gateway (AAG) Cable System, which involves a $500-million cable system that will connect Southeast Asia to the United States. PLDT international & carrier business group head Victorico P. Vargas, (1st row, 2nd from right) represented the phone giant in the signing of the AAG Construction & Maintenance Agreement in Malaysia. With Vargas are the representatives of the other participating telecom firms in Asia.

RLC to issue ₱2B in 5-year notes

ROBINSONS LAND CORP. WILL ISSUE P2 billion worth of fixed-rate, five-year notes to raise funds for capital expenditure.

In a disclosure, the company said the notes would carry an interest rate to be determined before the end of May.

RLC has appointed The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp. Ltd. as lead manager.

The company earlier said it was setting aside P7.5 billion for projects in 2007 to take advantage of the booming office space and residential market.

The projects include the construction of a third tower for its "Cybergate Center" in Mandaluyong and another office building in Quezon City.

RLC also earlier said it was investing P15 billion until 2008 (inclusive of 2007 capex) in new malls, offices, land acquisitions and housing projects after raising fresh capital from the stock market.

It is earmarking 40 percent of the P15 billion for new malls in Dumaguete, Bulacan, Paco (in Manila), Tagaytay and Davao, as well as for the renovation of existing malls in Ermita (Manila) and Bacolod. Another 30 percent will be spent for new office spaces catering to BPO firms.

Also, RLC is planning to build a 100-room hotel in Tagaytay which is scheduled for completion in 2009.

Elizabeth S. Lacson

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Ang Bangkong May Damdaming Bayan

STATEMENT OF CONDITION

(Head Office and Branches)
As of March 30, 2007

ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items	P	6,222,066,772
Due from Bangko Sentral		46,165,125,371
Due from Other Banks		1,053,707,541
Interbank Loans Receivable		17,479,052,697
Trading Account Securities (Net)		2,571,187,890
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		114,110,025,060
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)		137,641,737,805
Underwriting Accounts (Net)		93,275,100
Equity Investments (Net)		3,135,685,104
Bank Premises, Furniture,Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		4,619,977,988
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		11,903,708,573
Others		26,094,933,592
TOTAL ASSETS	P	371,090,483,493
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	101,335,503,879
Savings Deposits		157,454,886,200
Time Deposits		22,034,373,988
Special/Other Deposits		321,370,629
Due to Bangko Sentral		128,000,205
Due to Banks		1,617,583
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		1,122,325,581
Bills Payable:		
BSP-Rediscounting/Special Programs		442,566,140
Deposits Substitutes		-
Others		31,979,083,938
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		3,212,237,741
Other Liabilities		11,524,440,197
Unsecured Subordinated Debt (Inclusive of Unamortized Premium/Discount)		7,242,000,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	336,798,406,081
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	11,971,000,000
Surplus		9,379,383,570
Surplus Reserves		3,273,167,721
Other Capital Accounts		9,668,526,121
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		34,292,077,412
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	371,090,483,493
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	2,730,794,405
Bills for Collection		125,135,705
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		8,741,200,921
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		(1,198,956,162)
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		
Invested in:		
- Government Securities		22,800,689,512
- Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stocks		242,817,083
- Loans and Discounts		191,256,549
- Other Assets		12,998,020,371
Accountabilities:		
- Trust and Other Fiduciary		27,951,838,740
- Common Trust Funds		177,283,650
- Investment/Fund Management		8,103,661,125
Other Contingent Accounts		662,454,240
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	47,293,412,624

OTHER INFORMATION

1. Deposits of:		
a. Government	P	183,698,765,006
b. Banks		6,649,122,394
c. Trust Department		873,895,382
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
a. Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 6% (Small Enterprises)		20.87%
b. Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 2% (Medium Enterprises)		3.85%
3. Amount of Non-Performing Loans		9,750,921,955*
4. Ratio of Non-Performing Loans to Total Loan Portfolio		5.73%
5. Amount of Classified Loans and Other Risk Assets		31,635,170,897
6. General Provision for Loan Losses		1,400,597,722
7. Specific Provision for Loan Losses		13,732,689,512
8. Return on Equity (ROE)		12.56%
9. Amount of DOSRI Loans/Advances		27,817,493,350
10. Ratio of DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		16.34%
11. Amount of Past Due DOSRI Loans/Advances		276,403,910
12. Ratio of Past Due DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		0.16%

* *Includes Loans Classified as "Loss" which are fully covered by Allowance for Probable Losses amounting to P425,496,106.43*

I/We, ANDRES C. SARMIENTO and GILDA E. PICO of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Statement of Condition are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

Sgd. ANDRES C. SARMIENTO
SVP, Controllership Group

Sgd. GILDA E. PICO
President & CEO

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 4th day of May 2007 in Manila City, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 01578477, issued in Manila City on January 5, 2007 and Residence Certificate No. 05135611 issued in Calamba, Laguna on January 3, 2007.

Doc. No. 73
Page No. 16
Book No. V
Series of 2007

EFREN O. BRILLANTE
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2007
PTR No. 5362393/1-12-07, Manila
Roll No. 36300, TIN No. 105-559-708

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION

(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of March 30, 2007

ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items	P	6,222,156,554
Due from Bangko Sentral		46,165,125,371
Due from Other Banks		1,081,955,625
Interbank Loans Receivable		17,479,052,697
Trading Account Securities (Net)		2,571,187,890
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		114,162,380,284
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)		137,977,827,734
Underwriting Accounts (Net)		93,275,100
Equity Investments (Net)		2,540,100,397
Bank Premises, Furniture,Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		4,702,817,519
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		11,917,891,551
Others		26,724,599,343
TOTAL ASSETS	P	371,638,170,065
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	101,314,480,326
Savings Deposits		157,431,802,013
Time Deposits		22,034,373,988
Special/Other Deposits		321,370,629
Due to Bangko Sentral		128,000,205
Due to Banks		1,617,583
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		1,122,325,581
Bills Payable:		
BSP-Rediscounting/Special Programs		442,566,140
Deposits Substitutes		-
Others		31,979,083,938
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		3,608,370,452
Other Liabilities		11,505,399,364
Unsecured Subordinated Debt (Inclusive of Unamortized Premium/Discount)		7,242,000,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	337,131,390,219
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	11,971,000,000
Surplus		9,594,086,004
Surplus Reserves		3,273,167,721
Other Capital Accounts		9,668,526,121
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		34,506,779,846
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	371,638,170,065
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	2,730,794,405
Bills for Collection		125,135,705
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		8,741,200,921
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		(1,198,956,162)
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TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	47,293,412,624

OTHER INFORMATION

1. Deposits of:		
a. Government	P	183,698,765,006
b. Banks		6,649,122,394
c. Trust Department		873,895,382

2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries
   - a. LBP Leasing Corporation
   - b. LBP Financial Services, SPA
   - c. LBP Remittance Co., USA

I/We, ANDRES C. SARMIENTO and GILDA E. PICO of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Statement of Condition are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

Sgd. ANDRES C. SARMIENTO
SVP, Controllership Group

Sgd. GILDA E. PICO
President & CEO

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 4th day of May 2007 in Manila City, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 01578477, issued in Manila City on January 5, 2007 and Residence Certificate No. 05135611 issued in Calamba, Laguna on January 3, 2007.

Doc. No. 74
Page No. 16
Book No. V
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Notary Public
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Roll No. 36300, TIN No. 105-559-708

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CHOICE KNOWN SOON

Race for BTr top post heats up

By Daxim L. Lucas

FOR THE FIFTH TIME DURING HER ADMINistration, President Macapagal-Arroyo would have to appoint a new national treasurer to oversee the government's fiscal management activities.

Once again, various groups in the public and private sectors are lobbying for their candidates to head the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr), which is an influential force in the financial community despite the state's lessening dependence on debt.

Finance Secretary Margarito B. Teves believes the job is critical as the national treasurer is responsible for the prudent management of the government's cash. Apart from having to be on the constant lookout for opportunities to borrow funds cheaply, Teves said the national treasurer should also watch for chances to lighten the government's cash obligations by lengthening the maturity of existing debt as much as possible.

Balancing act

The national treasurer's decisions—along with that of the central bank—help determine how much borrowers will have to pay for bank loans. Ultimately, his decisions help determine the prices of goods and services which everyone pays for. Because of this, however, the banking community and the central monetary authority are always interested in having "their man" running the BTr. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, in particular, has historically exerted a strong influence in the appointment of BTr heads because the office's ability to either help or disrupt the implementation of monetary policies.

"There is a natural tension between the job of the national treasurer and that of the central bank (governor)," said East West Banking Corp. president and CEO Antonio C. Moncupa Jr.

"The treasurer always wants to borrow at the least cost and drive rates down, which may not be in the interests of the central bank in the short term."

Moncupa explained that a national treasurer who was interested only in driving down his borrowing costs might find himself "whiplashed" when low interest stoke inflation and correct sharply in the opposite direction which, in turn, could result in a weaker economy down the road.

Regulator-market players

Banks, for their part, often root for a treasurer who is not too single-minded about driving down interest rates, which result in lower interest income for bondholders.

"As with any agency, it is always good to have the regulators and the market players see eye to eye," Moncupa said.

Former National Treasurer Sergio G. Edeza agrees with the need for understanding between fiscal authorities on one hand and the central bank and the financial market on the other, but added this understanding should not result in collusion.

"It is important to get along with the BSP, but [the treasurer] must see the delineation of roles," he said. "Their positions can be contradictory at times."

Edeza, who has served both at the BSP and the BTr said that the central bank must keep its eye on "the bigger picture"—the inflation rate—which may come at the expense of the government's borrowing costs.

Prestigious but low-paying

Prestige remains the main reason for candidates to queue up for the job, but the low pay—just slightly more than P30,000 a month—is the top deterrent.

On top of being penalized with low pay, national treasurers are also barred from working in the private sector for a year after they quit their government post.

"So you penalize the person twice," said Edeza who now runs the treasury department of the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and heads the Money Market Association of the Philippines.

Favorites

Deterrents notwithstanding, the race for the influential post is heating up. Officials familiar with the issue say that Moncupa has been on the central bank's shortlist for every national treasurer vacancy since 2001. Other central bank favorites include Deutsche Bank country manager Eric Cruz or HSBC treasurer Jose Arnulfo Veloso. All three are highly regarded by the international and domestic financial communities although they are hesitant to give up their lucrative private sector careers.

Teves is pushing for the appointment of Land Bank of the Philippines senior executive vice president Alfonso B. Cruz Jr., a loyal lieutenant who helped him clean up the bank's balance sheet and streamline its treasury operations.

The Department of Finance insiders, however, is backing Deputy National Treasurer Eduardo S. Mendiola, a career official who has long served as second fiddle in the agency for want of a political backer.

Teves said the Palace's choice for the post might be announced later this week.

"At least, if Malacañang appoints a 'Cruz' to the post, foreign bondholders may not notice that it's no longer Omar Cruz running the show," said one banker.

Geograce stock rights offering starts May 15

EXISTING SHAREHOLDERS OF Geograce Resources Philippines Inc. as of May 3, 2007 are eligible to participate in the "one offer share for every three-and-a-half shares held" stock rights offering of the company from May 15 to 21.

The offer price was set at P1 per share.

Geograce is offering stock rights equivalent to 560.46 million common shares to raise up to P560 million, which will be used to fund its project development program, exploration costs, asset acquisitions and additional working capital.

The company is engaged in mining, particularly in tenement acquisitions and management, with presence in Zambales, Palawan and Bukidnon. Its strategic partners include Australian company Rusina Mining NL and Canadian mining and metal refining firm Chemical Vapour Metal Refining Inc.

The company has engaged JP Morgan as its financial adviser for possible capital raising activities, along with specific advisory on cross border mergers and acquisitions.

The rights offer shares are expected to be listed at the Philippine Stock Exchange on May 25, 2007.

Biofuels standards sought

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINES, INDONESIA AND Thailand will spearhead efforts to come up with common biofuels standards, which will allow these countries to export their biofuels with less hassle.

"Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia have something in common in terms of having a strong agricultural base. Therefore, we are in the position to develop the biofuels sector," Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said. "So it is in the common interest of East Asian countries that we push now for the development of common standards, so that the 'tradeability' of biofuels will be enhanced in the future," he added.

Lotilla, who attended a recent energy ministers' meeting in Riyadh, said Thai Energy Minister Piyavasti Amaranand had agreed that his country and the Philippines should work together in building up the biofuels sector in various international fora.

A separate meeting with Indonesian special envoy Alwi Shihab yielded the same results.

According to Lotilla, Shihab said the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand—all potential biofuels exporters—should ensure that biofuels and vehicles using such fuels would not be hampered by "artificial barriers to trade."

To facilitate the creation of common biofuels standards in the region, Lotilla said the Philippines had proposed the conduct of a workshop that would allow countries in the region to exchange information on the status of their respective national efforts on developing biofuels standards and to determine the next steps for moving forward. The Department of Foreign Affairs would be helping the Department of Energy facilitate this workshop, he said.

"The three countries have agreed to come up with the common standards so that we will be able share this to other countries as well. We're organizing that workshop for a leveling of standards among the different East Asian countries," he said. He added that it would be easier to formulate common standards for biofuels since the proponents would be starting from scratch, unlike in the case of oil products, where each country already had its own set of standards.

Banks' FCDU assets hit all-time high of $23.6B

Previous peak recorded in 1997 at $21.7

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COMBINED ASSETS OF THE foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs) of the banking industry reached an all-time high of $23.59 billion in 2006, rising by 13.8 percent from year-ago level.

"This (the 2006 FCDU asset level) surpassed the prior peak of $21.7 billion hit in 1997," the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said in a statement issued yesterday.

FCDUs are units of banks that handle transactions involving foreign currencies.

Deposits in FCDUs form another layer of foreign reserves for the country, on top of the reserves kept by the BSP.

According to BSP data, a major component of the FCDU assets of banks is investments, including those in the form of securities. Of last year's FCDU assets, investments accounted for $11.268 billion, representing a year-on-year increase of 12.7 percent.

Interbank loans accounted for $6.43 billion of the total assets while loans amounted to $2.65 billion. Collectibles from other banks amounted to $2.489 billion while collectibles from the BSP reached $38 million.

"Asset preference shifted in favor of marketable securities. The proportion of assets held in this type of securities rose to 35.7 percent from 32. 9 percent in the previous year," the BSP said.

The liabilities of the FCDU system last year were largely in the form of deposits ($18.774 billion), which grew by 14.1 percent from the 2005 level.

The BSP said the major beneficiaries of loans provided by FCDUs were the manufacturing, utilities, transportation, storage and communication sectors.

The nonperforming loans ratio of the country's FCDUs improved to 1 percent from the previous year's 1.8 percent. The nonperforming assets ratio also improved to 0.4 percent of total assets from the previous year's 0.7 percent, the BSP said.

Voting is personal

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

I FIRST VOTED IN 1946. I WAS 20 years old and a high school senior. There are not too many from my batch who will vote next week.

Looking back, my vote has seldom been based on ideology or partisanship. Voting has usually been a deeply personal act.

Because of my peripatetic insurance career, I have voted, not only in my hometown Naga City, but also in Manila (Sampaloc and Singalong), Cebu and Davao. Since 1962, I have voted in Makati.

In 1946, I voted Roxas for president. A riveting public speaker, he awed me with his vision of an industrialized Philippines when he came to campaign in Naga. I then made up my mind to take a share in his vision. I decided to become a mechanical engineer.

I voted for Ramon Magsaysay. Then I chose Diosdado Macapagal. I am ashamed to admit I voted for Marcos (he really had me fooled). I voted for Cory in the snap election. Then, I chose Salonga although I knew he would not win. Against Erap, I voted Roco. I knew Raul had no chance but I chose him anyway, being a fellow Bicolano. I chose Ate Glo because I did not want the country to be run by another actor.

Whenever I choose whom to vote as president, governor or mayor, I usually vote for the official running mate, even a Noli de Castro. No split voting for me.

One of the country's most brilliant lawyers ran for vice president. It turned out that in the previous year, he paid only P14 in income tax. As a government clerk at the time, I paid more. I never, ever, voted for the lawyer in his long political career.

I believe a president should have a working majority in the House and the Senate. After I have chosen whom to vote as president, I then vote for most, if not all, of his party mates in the senatorial slate. So what if I have to vote for someone whose only job on the Senate floor is to vote for whatever the president wants? Do you think the Senators in the United States and the members of the UK Parliament are all brilliant lawmakers?

Besides, when you are choosing 12 senators-at-large, you are not at a buffet dinner where you pick only the dishes you fancy, as the PPCRV wants us to do. You are at a set dinner, and you eat whatever is served, from soup to nuts.

Voting for mayor is even more personal for me. In Makati, I have voted for Binay because we are friends. I also always voted for his vice-mayor and councilors.

Before the invention of the voter's ID and the use of the indelible ink, I was a flying voter. I voted very early in Makati. Then, I drove down to Naga. I arrived there in plenty of time to vote for my high school buddy who was running for mayor. I did not even care who his opponent was. I had dinner at my buddy's house, and got drunk onwards. By the way, my high school chum was one of the best mayors Naga ever had.

Now, at age 81, and 61 years after my first vote, whom will I choose next week? Since I voted for Ate Glo in 2004, I want her to have a working majority in the Senate. I will vote for Team Unity, except Angara, Sotto and Oreta. I will replace them with fellow Bicolano, Escudero, and two others I have yet to choose.

I do not vote for an independent candidate. If he cannot run under a party, there must be something wrong with him.

I will vote for Teddy Boy Locsin as congressman. He has done well for my district, and he made a lot of sense during the impeachment and Garcillano hearings.

Call me selfish, but I will not jeopardize my ties at City Hall. I will again vote Binay and his entire ticket. Why should I vote for someone I do not know personally?

My party list choice is the Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives—Apec. They light up the countryside.

My right to vote is one of my most prized possessions. But, choosing whom to vote for has usually been a personal act. There is nothing immature or irresponsible about that.

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CHIANG MAI INITIATIVE

RP agrees to Asean plan to create pool of funds

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINES HAS AGREED to the plan of the Asean +3 to move the Chiang Mai Initiative forward with the creation of a common pool of funds that will help member-countries facing liquidity problems.

The Philippine delegation pledged its commitment to the plan by the Asean +3 during the Finance Ministers Meeting, which was concluded last Monday in Kyoto, Japan.

The Chiang Mai Initiative was established in 2000 to protect member countries against another currency crisis similar to what swept the region in 1997.

Under the proposed multilateral system, which could be operational by next year, all members of the Asean +3 will contribute to the pool of funds.

Under the old system, member-countries facing cash flow problems could only borrow from countries it has bilateral ties with, thus, limiting their financial options.

Some $80 billion were made available for any troubled country by the bilateral agreements forged under the Chiang Mai Initiative.

"Multilateralizing is a logical step following the bilateral system. This initiative shows that there is a better demonstration of commitment among Asean + 3 for cooperation to protect the region against a possible crisis," said Diwa Guinigundo, deputy governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Guinigundo said a task force within the Asean +3 would craft the guidelines to implement the Chiang Mai Initiative.

The guidelines will state how much each member-country will contribute to the fund.

He said the contribution would be based on a country's gross international reserves.

Guinigundo said there would be no third party to hold the pool of funds, but that each country would earmark a portion of its reserves as contribution to the fund.

A country's contribution to the fund will not be physically taken out of its territory.

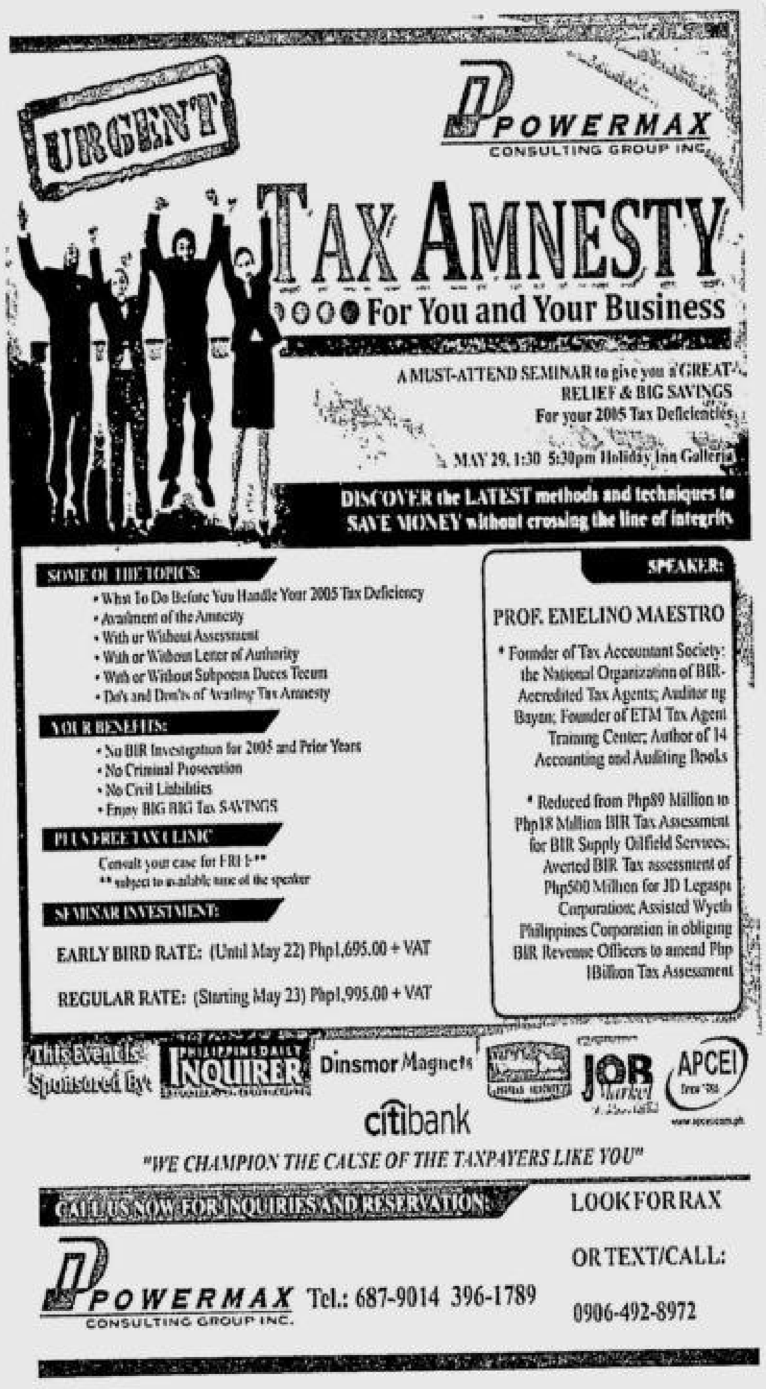
Funds would be taken out only if another member-country asks for help.

Asean groups the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei and the smaller economies of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.

The three non-Asean countries are Japan, China and South Korea.

Guinigundo said that since the establishment of the Chiang Mai Initiative, no country has so far asked for financial assistance.

Even so, he said, the Asean +3 found it prudent to put up measures that will protect the region from another possible crisis, rather than act only when a problem arises.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* Reduced from Php89 Million to Php18 Million BIR Tax Assessment for BIR Supply Oilfield Services; Averted BIR Tax assessment of Php500 Million for JD Legaspi Corporation; Assisted Wyeth Philippines Corporation in obliging BIR Revenue Officers to amend Php 1Billion Tax Assessment

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SOCIAL HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION
a subsidiary of National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC), through its Approved Corporate Budget for 2007, intends to apply the sum of Php 1.9 Million being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Supply of Personal Computers and paraphernalia under Project Number 2007-02. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The SHFC now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the supply of personal computers and paraphernalia as follows:

Description	Quantity	TOTAL
Desktop PC		40
• NCR	36	
• Regional Offices	4	
Printers		12
• Laser		
NCR	3	
• Deskjet		
NCR	2	
Regional Offices	4	
• Dot Matrix		
NCR	3	
Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS)		40
• NCR	36	
• Regional Offices	4	

Delivery period · One month upon receipt of Notice to Proceed

The Description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents ITB. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 5 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from SHFC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of Php 1,900.00. The method of payment will be on cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The SHFC will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on May 17, 2007, 10:00 a.m. at 5th Flr., BDO Plaza, 8737 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before time and date. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security either in the form of cash, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit and in the amount of Php 19,000.00. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on May 29, 2007, 10:00 a.m. at 5th Flr., BDO Plaza, 8737 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The SHFC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

SOCIAL HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION
Ofelia Millarez, BAC Secretariat
6th Floor, BDO Plaza, 8737 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
Tel Nos. 7506346-47, locals 320-322
Fax No. 8173168
E-mail Add: info@shfcph.com
Website Add: www.shfcph.com

(Sgd.) Eduardo T. Manicio
BAC Chairman

(PDI–May 9, 2007)

Local firms to join Asia's biggest IT fair

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TEN LOCAL FIRMS, INCLUDING Philippine Long Distance Telephon Co. and Globe Telecommunications, are joining Asia's biggest information technology trade show in Singapore next month to promote the Philippine brand of services, especially wireless communications.

Stephen Tan, chief executive of Singapore Exhibition Services Pte. Ltd., organizer of CommunicAsia 2007, said in a briefing that the interactive, digital media and entertainment segments would be in the spotlight in this year's fair.

"Observers project that the media and entertainment industry in the Asia-Pacific market will hit $431 billion by 2009," Tan said. "The Philippine government has continued to ensure the participation of Philippine companies at CommunicAsia to help in creating a bigger market for them," he said.

Local firms started to join in 2004 when the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions organized a group to showcase the country's telecommunications and software development sectors.

This year, aside from PLDT and Globe, other participants include D3 Systems Inc., Emerson Network Power, Innove Communiations, Institute of Electronics Engineers of the Philippines, Mabuhay Satellite Corp., Philippine Software Industry Association, Software Effective Solutions and Sysnet Integrators.

In a statement, Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said the presence of local firms in CommunicAsia aims at promoting the Philippine brand of ICT services to Asia and the world.

Trade Assistant Secretary Fe Agoncillo-Reyes, who is also Citem executive director, had reported that local firms clinched contracts worth a total of $6.2 million in last year's fair, which showed their hold in the niche of value-added services like creative content in mobile phones.

DA expands hatcheries to tap fish export mart

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE wants the Philippines to get a bigger share of the multi-billion fish export business with the construction and expansion of multi-species fish hatchery facilities in Tawi-Tawi, Palawan and Samar.

"These three hatcheries will supply quality fry and fingerlings of high-value food fishes such as lapu-lapu (grouper), apahap (sea bass) and snapper to local fish cage operators in existing mariculture parks," Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Director Malcolm Sarmiento said in a statement.

A P15-milion hatchery in Tawi-Tawi is due for completion in July this year, while some P8 million had already been allocated for the improvement and expansion of the multi-species hatchery in Sta. Lucia, Palawan.

"With these hatcheries, sea cage operators could easily shift production from bangus to lapu-lapu and other high-value species, which command higher prices especially when sold live to China, Japan and other countries in the Southeast Asian region," Sarmiento added.

According to data from the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS), the Philippines exported some 7,140 metric tons of lapu-lapu, valued at $14.9 million, in 2005.

"We are optimistic that export sales from lapu-lapu alone would increase by two- to three-fold in the first year of operation by the three hatcheries, compared to the 2005 level," Sarmiento said.

The DA has also allocated more funds for the fisheries subsector this year, to fund projects that would help sustain its performance in 2007.

Accounting for 23.68 percent of total output, the fisheries sector was the biggest gainer among all agricultural sectors with an 8.52-percent growth in the first quarter of 2007.

In 2006, fisheries also registered the biggest gain with a 6.31-percent growth.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
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cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
NAIGAI NITTO LOGISTICS PHILS. INC. 6/F Adamson Centre Bldg. 121 L.P. Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Brgy. Bel-Air, Makati City	Manabu Shibata	General Manager
NAM'S GOLF CORP. 3/F JGC Phils. Annex Bldg., 1606 Trade St., Investment Drive, MBP Ayala, Alabang , Muntinlupa City	Bo Hean Nam	President
NO. 1 ACTIVITY NETWORK SYSTEM (NANS), INC. Unit 22pc Eisenhower Condominium, # 7 Eisenhower St., San Juan, Metro Manila	Kyoung Sook Lee (w/o GU)	Asst. Operations Manager
METEX INT'L. TRADING INC. 111-B 6th Ave., Brgy 121, District 13, Bagong Silang, Kalookan City	Jialu Wang	Marketing Manager
ACHORN INTERNATIONAL, INC. 8/F Pet Plane Tower, 444 EDSA Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City	Paul David Hartley	Chief Executive Officer
OLIMPIAD LEARNING CENTER INC. Westgate Tower Investment Drive, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Youngsoon Choi (w/o Seo)	Supervisor
SILAHIS INTERNATIONAL HOTEL, INC. (GRAND BOULEVARD HOTEL) 5/F Grand Boulevard Hotel, 1990 Roxas Boulevard, Malate, Manila	Flemming Nielsen	Deputy General Manager
PHILIPPINE EDS TECHNO-SERVICE, INC. (PET) 20/F 6788 Ayala Ave., Oledan Square, Makati City	Nobuyuki Asakura	TCED (Terminal Crimping Evaluation Dept.) Manager
KDDI PHILIPPINES CORP. 1804 Antel 2000 Corporate Centre, No. 121 Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Nobuo Tanaka	Treasurer
SYKES ASIA INC. 26/F Robinson Summit Center, 6783 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Kyoungho Son	Korean Client Support
SYKES ASIA INC. 26/F Robinson Summit Centre, 6783 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Ilwoong Park	Korean Client Support
SYKES ASIA INC. 26/F Robinson Summit Centre, 6783 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Woojin Jung	Korean Client Support
ROBERT BOSCH, INC. 14/F L.V. Locsin Bldg., 6752 Ayala Avenue cor. Makati Avenue, Makati City	Ka Chung Lee	General Manager
MAKATI SHANGRI-LA HOTEL & RESORT INC. Ayala Avenue cor. Makati Avenue, Makati City	Kin Man Wu	Chinese Executive Chef

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

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(PDI–May 9, 2007)

SOCIAL HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION
a subsidiary of National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO RE-BID

The Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC), through its Approved Corporate Budget for 2007, intends to apply the sum of Php 3.5 Million being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Supply and Installation of Air-conditioning Units for 15th Floor under Project Number 2007-01. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The SHFC now invites suppliers/ manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to participate in the re-bidding of the hereunder project:

Name of Project : Supply and Installation of Air-conditioning Units for 15th Floor
Location : BDO Plaza, 8737 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
Contract Duration : One month upon receipt of Notice to Proceed
Delivery Period : One month upon receipt of Notice to Proceed

The Description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 5 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and Its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from SHFC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of Php 1,500.00. The method of payment will be on cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The SHFC will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on May 16, 2007, 10:00 a.m. at 5th Flr., BDO Plaza, 8737 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

Bid opening shall be on May 28, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at 5th Flr., BDO Plaza, 8737 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The SHFC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

SOCIAL HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION
Ofelia Millarez, BAC Secretariat
6th Floor, BDO Plaza, 8737 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
Tel Nos. 7506346-47, locals 320-322
Fax No. 8173168
E-mail Add: info@shfcph.com
Website Add: www.shfcph.com

(Sgd.) EDUARDO T. MANICIO
BAC Chairman

(PDI–May 9, 2007)

LB (Land Bank) Realty Development Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank Realty Development Corporation (LBRDC) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all contractors, registered and with CIAP registration classified at least "(SMALL/MEDIUM)" by Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) for Building and Industrial Plant, are invited to apply for eligibility and bid for the hereunder project:

LBP - BSP SERVICING UNIT RENOVATION	60 CD, LBP FUND	P 700,000.00
LBP - BOC MICP BRANCH RENOVATION	45 CD, LBP FUND	P 350,000.00
LBP - NOVALICHES BRANCH RENOVATION	45 CD, LBP FUND	P 2,400,000.00

The Schedule of CBA activities are as follows:

Activities	Date/Time	Venue
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of LOI including Application	MAY 09-16, 2007 @ 9:30-4:30PM	LBRDC
2. Issuance of Eligibility Documents	MAY 16-22, 2007 @ 9:30-4:30PM	LBRDC
3. Submission of Eligibility Requirements	MAY 23, 2007 @ 9:30-4:30PM	LBRDC

The Bidding Documents shall be available of BAC Secretariat Office, 30th flr. Land bank Plaza, 1598 M.H. Del Pilar St., Malate Manila. Bidding shall be conducted with procedures under the Implementing Rules & Regulation of RA 9184 otherwise known as the Government procurement Act. Upon payment of non-refundable amount of P 500.00 for Eligibility Documents.

LBRDC likewise reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby including any liability to the affected bidder or bidders and to accept the bid most advantageous to LBRDC.

LBRDC reserves the right to change the ABC, date of issuance of bid documents, pre-bid conference, dropping and opening of bids. Due notice of changes shall however be communicated by LBRDC to invited bidders.

For further details, please call **Mr. Allan Redondo / Aries L. Mendoza** at 405-7169/405-7402/405-7135.

(Sgd.) CHAIRMAN
Committee on Bids and Awards

(PDI–May 9, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHEASTERN PHILIPPINES
Obrero, Davao City

NOTICE OF SEARCH AND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Board of Regents of the University of Southeastern Philippines formally and publicly announces that the Search for Presidency of the **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHEASTERN PHILIPPINES** is now open. Interested applicants and/or nominees are invited to send their formal applications to the Search Committee chaired by Commissioner Saturnino M. Ocampo, Jr.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- Must be a Natural-born Filipino citizen;
- A holder of an earned doctorate degree;
- Preferably not more than 61 years old upon assumption to office;
- Must have a proven leadership and managerial skills within the purview of the university's mission, vision and goals; and
- Must have at least five (5) years of administrative experience.

In addition to the above-mentioned qualifications, the applicants are required to submit the following clearances:

- National Bureau of Investigation Clearance; and
- Ombudsman Clearance.

Formal application addressed to the Search Committee should be accompanied with:

- Detailed Curriculum Vitaé and authenticated/certified supporting documents;
- The applicants proposed Vision and Thrust for the University;
- Result of Psychological Testing accomplished by an accredited Test Center; and
- Result of the Drug Testing conducted by a government accredited Test Center.

Interested applicants and/or those nominated for the position are requested to submit eight (8) sets of their formal application and certified supporting documents on or before June 4, 2007 to:

MARLON RUBEN N. FABRICANTE
Executive Assistant IV
Office of Commissioner Saturnino M. Ocampo, Jr.
CHED, 5/F DAP Bldg., San Miguel Avenue,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. No. (02) 636-1690
Telefax No. (02) 636-1693

OR

DR. SUSAN F. LABUTAP
University/Board Secretary
University of Southeastern Philippines
Obrero, 8000 Davao City
Tel. No. (082) 225-4696
Telefax No. (082) 221-7737

(PDI - May 4, 9 & 12, 2007)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given to the public that **Ms. Rhona V. Apordo of Lopez Boulevard Intertowne Homes, Pagbilao, Quezon** is no longer connected with MarMonSol Foundation, Inc. effective February 16, 2007. Any transaction entered into by her on behalf of the Foundation will not be honored.

The Foundation

(PDI--May 9, 2007)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be advised that **SEBASTIAN ZAHN** is no longer connected with **PGA Cars, Inc. / Porsche Center Philippines** effective March 30, 2007. Any transaction entered into by the above person for and on behalf of **PGA Cars, Inc. / Porsche Center Philippines** from the said date shall not be honored.

(PDI--May 9, 2007)

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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **PALMERA HOMES, INCORPORATED** with office address at **Las Piñas Business Center, National Road, Talon, Las Piñas City** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New Developer of Mass Housing Project (Altezza)** with capacity of **363 Low-cost/Economic Housing Units** with project/plant site located at **Barangay 168, Deparo, Caloocan City.**

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration
Department

(PDI–May 9, 2007)

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DENTHAPHIL, INC.
Notice is given that Demand Draft No. 001372 in the amount of US$7,500 under the name of RIVKIN RADLER LLP was lost since February 19, 2007.
(PDI - May 4-10, 2007)

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OBITUARIES

MILAGROS ENDENCIA BALTAZAR

peacefully joined her Creator on May 07, 2007 at the age of 77.

Her beloved husband, **Vicente** (†), sisters **Sr. Annette Endencia RGS, Tita** (†), brothers **Felix** (†) and **Armando** (†), brother-in-law **Gueng Jose**, children and children-in-law **Raquel & Gene Florendo, Rebecca & Danny Ticsay, Regina & Alvin Agregado, Raul, Vicente Jr. & MeAn Encarnacion**; grandchildren **Miguel, Gabriel, Paulo, Mica, Bea, Iya, Mia & Anika** and ever faithful **Yaya Goning** and all relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at St. Euphrasia Chapel, Good Shepherd Convent, 1047 Aurora Blvd., near Katipunan, Quezon City.

Interment will be on May 12, 2007 at La Loma Cemetery after the 7:00 am Mass at Good Shepherd Convent.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Narcisa Serrano Puno

wish to express our deepest gratitude to all who showed their love, support and concern by sending flowers, mass cards, letters and cards of sympathy and spending precious time with us during our time of greatest sorrow.

MONINO NARVAEZ DE GUZMAN

joined his Creator on May 5, 2007.

He is survived by his loving wife **Aurora**; his children and their spouses, **Geraldine** and **Noel, Jovy** and **Ron, Carol** and **Robbie**; grandchildren **NG, Neil, Justin, Jac, David, Rance** and **Rainier**; and his siblings **Violeta, Mike, Manny** and **Elizabeth.**

His remains lie in state at La Bien Memorial Chapel in Maliksi, Bacoor, Cavite. A Mass will be held at St. Michael's Catholic Church at 9 a.m. on Thursday, May 10, 2007. His body will be cremated at the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque at 12 noon of the same day and his ashes will be laid to rest at Crypt 3 Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Atty. TOMAS POBRE EVANGELISTA

(Lawyer and Musician)

of Paoay, Ilocos Norte and Makati

PCGG LEGAL COUNSEL, UP LAW 1976
Member, Alpha Phi Beta Fraternity, UP
PALANAN ROTARY CLUB (MAKATI)

passed away in the grace of our Lord on May 7, 2007 at the Philippine General Hospital at the age of 57.

His caring spouse **Teresita**; daughter **Diwata** (UP BS Tourism 2007); mother **Belen Pobre Evangelista**; mother-in-law **Marcela Umandap**; sisters **Trinita Derbesse, Nanette & Corina**; brothers **Bing, Jonjo, & Jess**; brothers-in-law **Vic, Lito, Ver, Chie, Fer, & Charlie**; sisters-in-law **Tess, Milagros, Emma, Baby, Mercy, & Lita**; the POBRE, EVANGELISTA and UMANDAP families and friends request everyone to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Faith Chapel of the St. John Bosco Parish Church in Makati City. Necrological services will be held tonight, May 9, at St. John Bosco Church. Interment will take place on Thursday, May 10, after the 10 a.m. Holy Mass at St. John Bosco.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

More Classified Ads

Supreme Court of the Philippines	A6
Department of Labor & Employment- NCR	B6
Landbank Realty Development Corp.	B6
Social Housing Finance Corporation	B6

Our Dearly Beloved

VALERIANA RAYO BATTAD

of San Miguel, Bulacan, Cubao, Q.C. and Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.

peacefully joined our Lord and her husband Jose J. Battad and son Jose R. Battad, Jr. on May 6, 2007 at the age of 82.

Her children **Josephine, Rey & Marichu, Bobby & Polly, Rene & Jophie** and **Gigi (Lui)**; her sisters **Milia & Uming**; grandchildren and all her relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz, Inc., Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 10, 2007 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 3:00 p.m. Mass at La Funeraria Paz.

JOSE L. BUENSUCESO

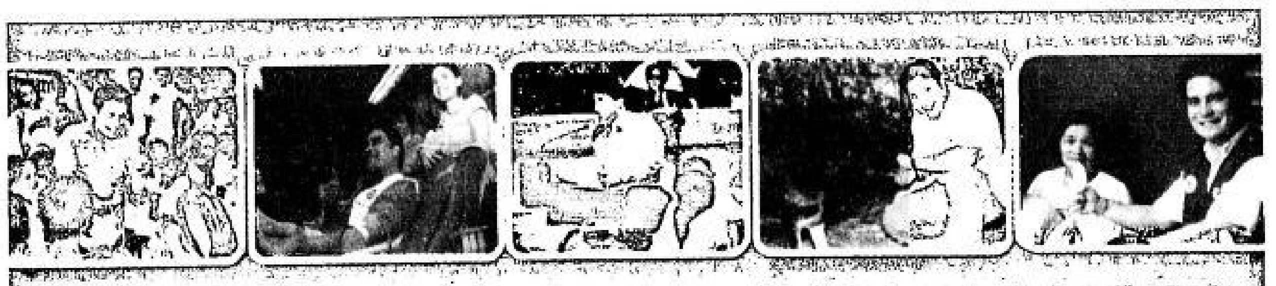
of Balanga, Bataan and Malabon City

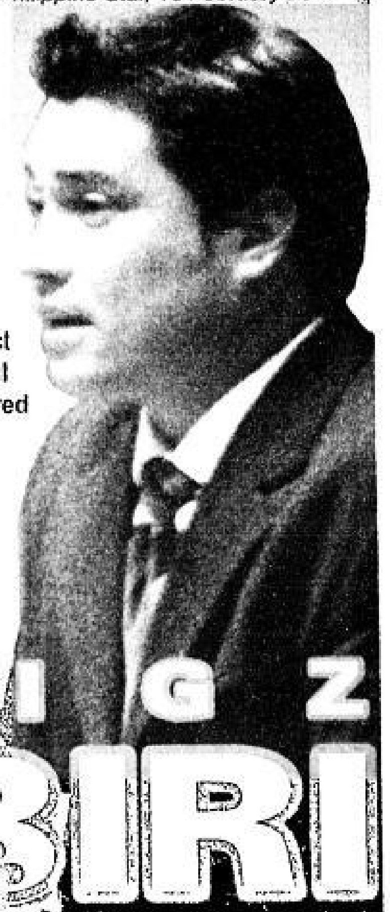
passed away in the grace of our Lord on May 7, 2007 at the age of 90.

His loving wife **Zenaida P. Gaza**; children **Victoria, Ma. Asuncion, Jean** and **Lizza**; sons-in-law **Michael Cleveland, Patrick Daly** and **Erick Gob**; grandchildren **Cristina, Joseph, Victor, Liam** and **Eliana**; brother **Benjamin**; sister **Manuela** and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to join them in prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremated remains now lie in state at the Garden Suite, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City. A final Mass will be celebrated at 8:30 p.m. today, May 9, 2007.

"From darkness let the light shine!" Genesis 1:3





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What they say about Miguel Zubiri

Three Young Men – *"The big difference between the likes of... (three young senatoriables) ...on the one hand, and Zubiri, on the other, is that Zubiri immersed himself in public service to feed his ambition, whereas the former just focused on their ambition."*

-Domini M. Torevillas, The Philippine Star, 24 March 2007

Unlike Rabble-Rousers, Zubiri Has Solid Bill – *"The two (senatoriables) were busy getting media mileage for their attacks against administration, by contrast, Migz Zubiri has been busy putting together his landmark Biofuels Act that was signed into law."*

- Belinda Olivares-Cunanan, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 27 March

House Records Show Zubiri Most Prolific Lawmaker – *"Juan Miguel Zubiri was the most prolific among the five congressmen running for the Senate in the May 14 elections"*

- Delon Porcalla, The Philippine Star, 15 February 2007

Kinilala bilang PINAKAMASIPAG na MAMBABATAS ng ika-13 KONGRESO

Ilan sa mga Naipasang Panukalang Batas:

- **R.A. 9367 Biofuels Act of 2006**
- **R.A. 9275 Clean Water Act**
- R.A. 9165 Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002
- **R.A. 9161 Rent Control Act**
- R.A. 9163 Optional ROTC Act
- R.A. 9147 Wildlife Conservation
- R.A. 9064 Athletes Compensation
- R.A. 9003 Solid Waste Management Act
- R.A. 9166 AFP Rate Base Pay Increase Act
- **HB00978 Barangay Workers Benefits Bill**
- **HB01340 Increase in Pension of all Retired Government Employees Bill**
- **HB01008 Workers Rights Bill**
- **HB00994 LGU Empowerment Bill**
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PARA SENADOR

GSIS willing to condone P3.5-B debt of gov't

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE System (GSIS) said it was willing to condone P3.5 billion of the remaining debts of the national government.

GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia said the amount was half the P7 billion worth of outstanding liabilities of the national government to the state pension fund.

"We (GSIS and the national government) are already negotiating, and the GSIS is willing to agree on a compromise," Garcia told reporters. He said the GSIS was amenable to condoning half of the government's remaining debts, especially since the performance of the latter in settling its obligations has improved.

Half of the P7-billion outstanding debt of the government to the GSIS is composed of interest, while the other half represented surcharges, both of which were imposed because of the delayed payment of the employers' share to the contributions of GSIS members to the pension fund.

In January, the government, through the Department of Budget and Management, already paid the principal amount of its debts to the GSIS worth P6.5 billion.

"The GSIS is willing to condone the surcharges, which is about half of the P7 billion," Garcia said.

The liabilities of the government to the GSIS, which dates back to 1996, was blamed by finance officials to the budget woes experienced in the past. But the government's improving fiscal position allowed it to finally settle the long overdue obligations.

In the late 1990s, the government started to post budget deficits following the financial crisis that hit Southeast Asian countries. The crisis, which shrank corporate earnings, resulted in lower tax collection by the government.

The budget deficit, however, has been on a decline. Last year, the gap hit only P64.8 billion compared with the P146.8 billion recorded in 2005. This year, the government expects the deficit to be trimmed further to only P63 billion and to zero by 2008.

The GSIS' willingness to condone P3.5 billion of the national government's debts came following its statement that it recently earned P27 billion from its investments in the stock market.

Garcia also said the pension fund manager was very liquid, with the improvement of its collection efficiency rate to 95 percent from only 65 percent in 2002. GSIS attributes the improved rate of its efficiency in the collection of contributions by members to improvement of its database and stricter collection system.

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6 months	3.75%	3.88%	3.88%	4.00%
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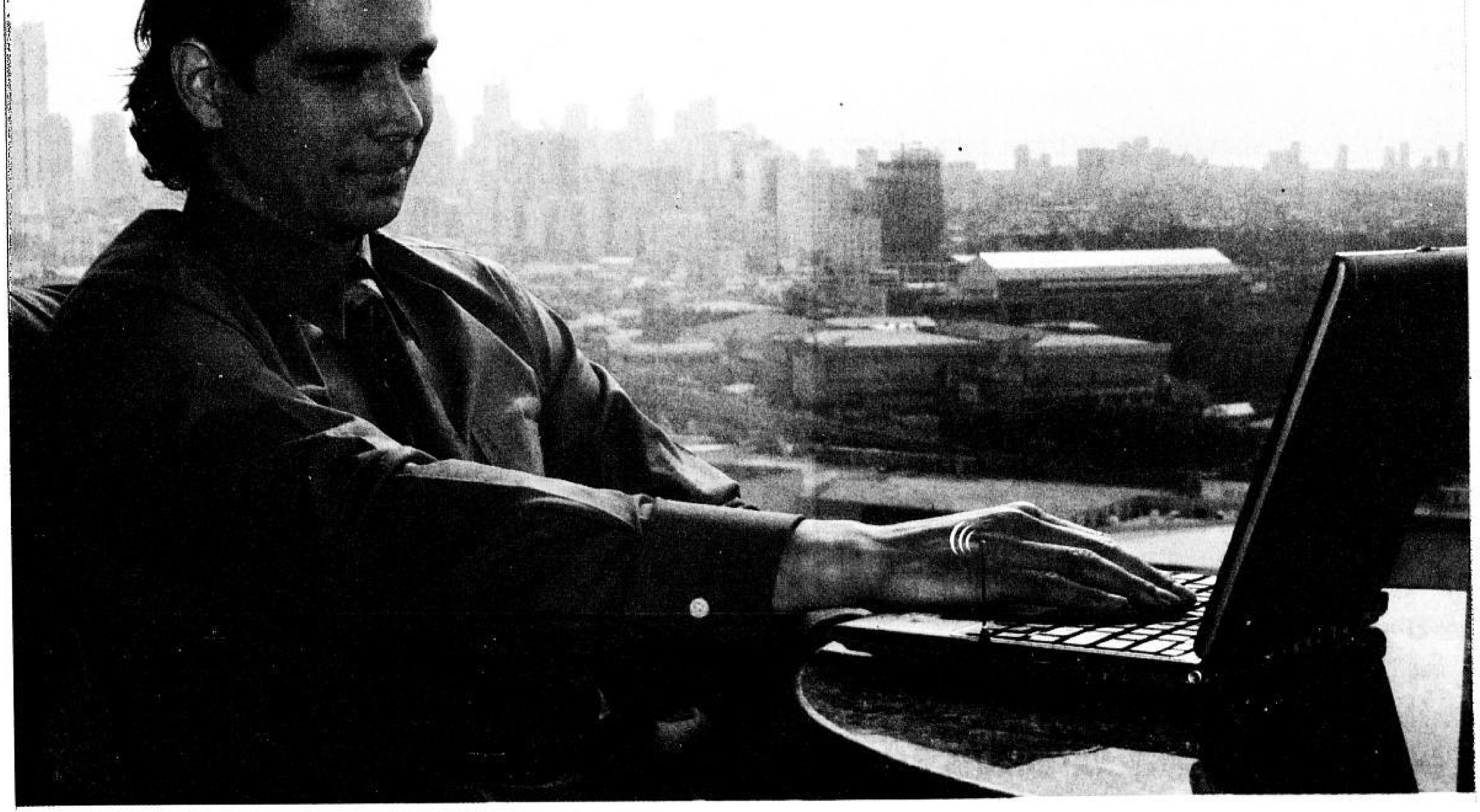

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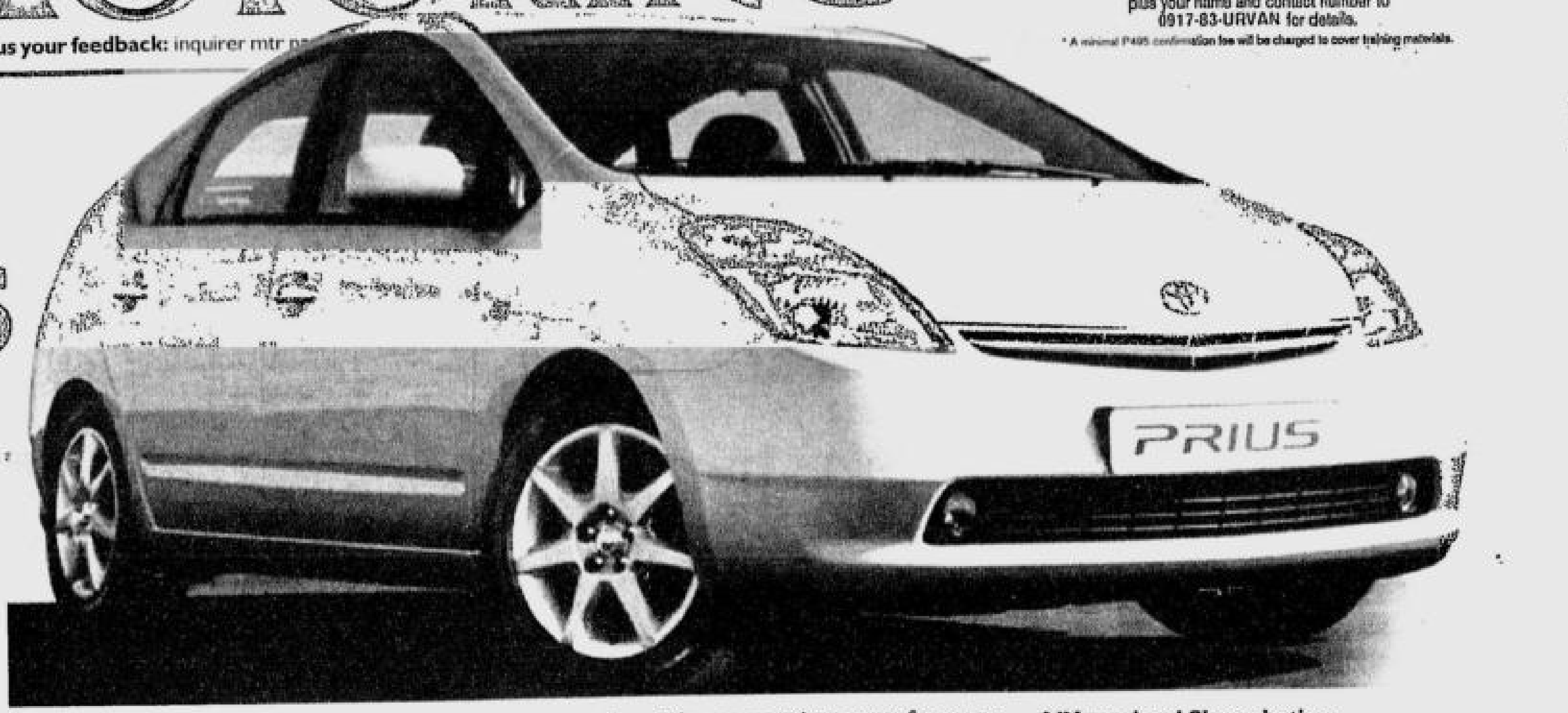
* A minimal P495 confirmation fee will be charged to cover training materials.

TECH DRIVE

14 lessons from a Prius hybrid car



MY precious! Skyrocketing fuel prices and an unreachable Prius

Text and photos by Tessa R. Salazar

EVERYBODY KNOWS the hybrid electric/gasoline Prius from Toyota isn't yet available in this country, no thanks to the ridiculously high price tag and the seeming inability of the government to give interested buyers substantial tax breaks.

So why are motorists seeing a couple of them running around the streets of Metro Manila nowadays? Well, INQUIRER Motoring can account for one of them as we recently tested the (near) future of motoring.

What resulted was, as expected, a delightful drive along the countryside and around the congested streets of the city with the least worries of burning up too much gasoline. But the experience was tinged with much longing, as well.

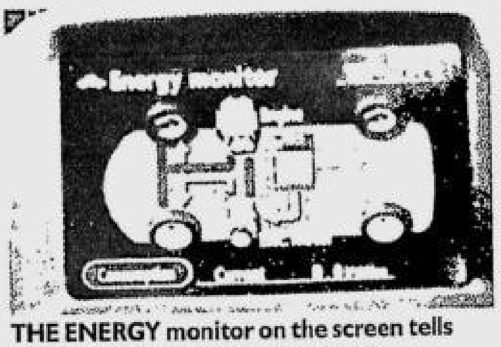
Longing for the day when the Prius' retail price would be slashed from an imposing P2 to 2.5 million to a more realistic P1 to 1.5 million. Longing for the year 2009 when, hopefully, the Prius would by then totally shed off its dependence on gasoline and be a full-fledged "plug-and-play" 100 percent electric car (a PHED, or plug-in hybrid electric vehicle, as calcars.org likes to do them). Longing for that same year when the Prius would be competing for attention along with other plug-in electric cars, such as GM's Volt, effectively bringing the price of such kinds of cars further down.

We all know that day will come, anyway. So, while anticipating for that dream drive of us ecologically-conscious motorists, here's what we learned while roaming around with the Prius.

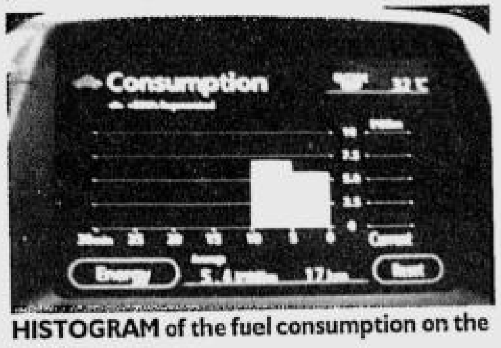
1 **Prius is all about energy, and that means maximizing its use while minimizing its loss.** The car gets its power from two sources: the gasoline engine and the electric engine. The electric engine is powered by a battery, which is alternately charged by the gasoline engine and the kinetic forces acting on the car (see number 4).

2 **The on-board computer manages the energy "traffic"—basically ordering which engine to turn on or off (sometimes both are on), depending on the car's speed and rate of acceleration/deceleration.** A dashboard touch-screen monitor provides the driver and passengers information as to which engines are currently being utilized, and color-coded energy flowcharts tell where power is flowing from and where it's going to. The same touch-screen monitor also provides the control for the air-conditioning and audio entertainment systems, by the way. Sounds complicated? Actually, all the driver has to do is

14 LESSONS/ B2-4



THE ENERGY monitor on the screen tells you which engine is doing the work.



HISTOGRAM of the fuel consumption on the touch screen

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The Bravado offers attractive features such as keyless entry system for convenience, appealing design details such as fog lamps, fabric seats, improved tires/alloy wheels and full rear bumper. All loaded with the dependable strength and legendary reliability of the Frontier.

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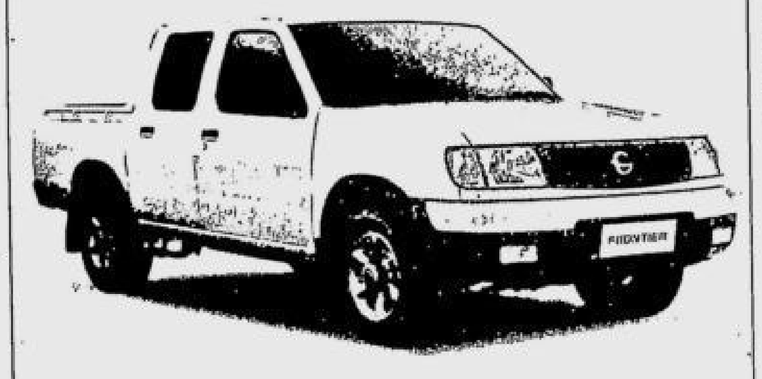

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Frontier Bravado
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GETTING BACK INTO THE GAME

Mitsubishi dishes out latest SUVs

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

MITSUBISHI Motors is getting back into the game. For the first time since the fiscal year 2002, the Tokyo-based automaker has turned a profit of $73 million (P3.4 billion) citing an annual sales increase of around 4 percent, among others.

Mitsubishi expects to sustain such incremental growth, a news gladly welcomed by Mitsubishi executives here in the Philippines.

"This would also mean accelerated development of new models that would bring renewed optimism to local car buyers toward our brand and

MITSUBISHI/ B2-3

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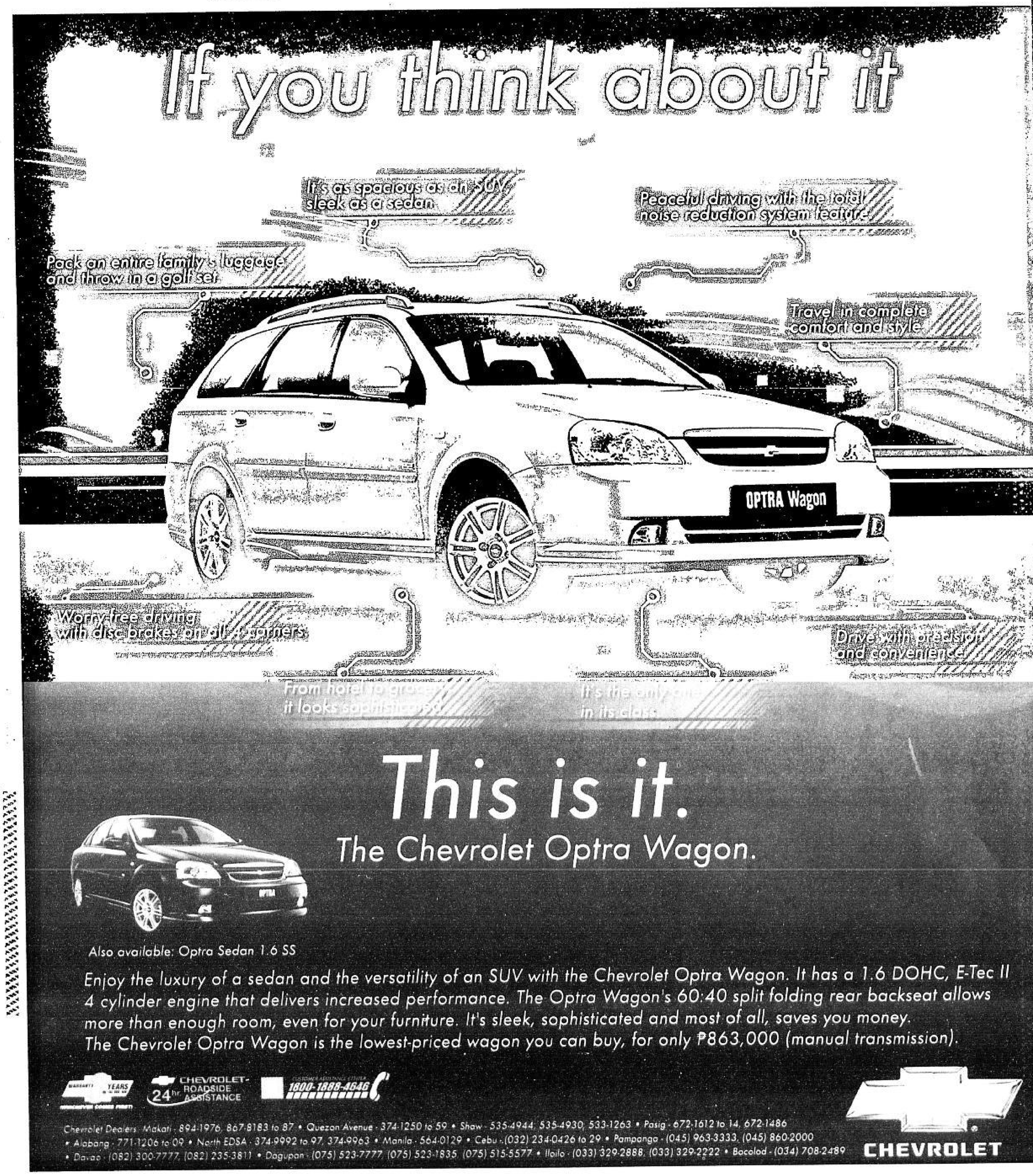

If you think about it
It's as spacious as an SUV, sleek as a sedan
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OPTRA Wagon
Worry-free driving with disc brakes on all 4 corners
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The Chevrolet Optra Wagon.

Also available: Optra Sedan 1.6 SS

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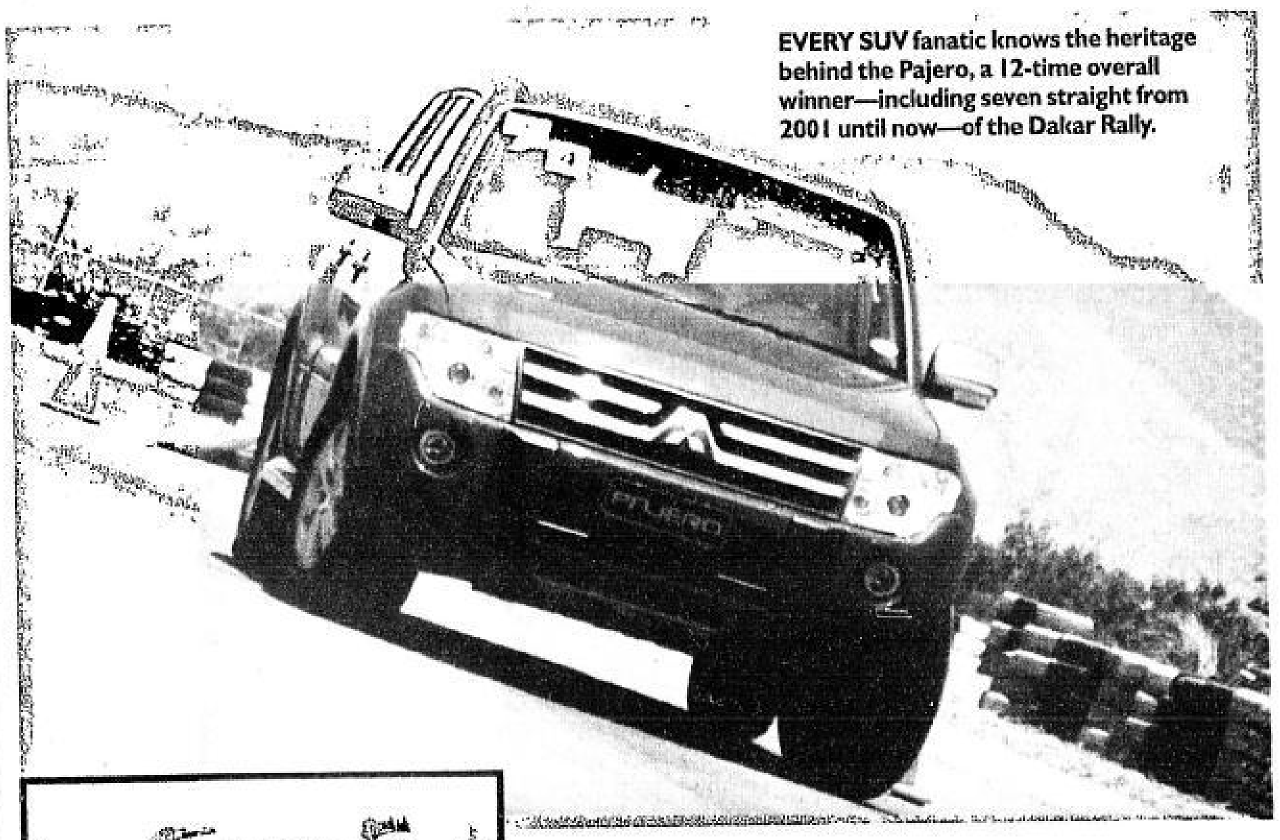


EVERY SUV fanatic knows the heritage behind the Pajero, a 12-time overall winner—including seven straight from 2001 until now—of the Dakar Rally.

THE ENDEAVOR'S geo-mechanical styling evokes speed, motion and power

Mitsubishi dishes . . .

From page B2-2

help Mitsubishi become one of the country's top two players," said Froilan Dytianquin, Mitsubishi Motors Philippines AVP for marketing services.

The fact is, MMPC may have already started the marketing drive when it recently introduced its three sport utility vehicle (SUV) models.

Solid products

And from what the motoring media experienced while taking the all-new Pajero, Endeavor and Outlander models for a short spin around Subic International Raceway last week, MMTC may have in their hands three solid products to dominate the country's SUV market.

Bannering the company's renewed vitality is the 4x4 Pajero, now sporting a much bolder yet cleaner look as well as choice of two engine variants—a 247 horsepower, 3.8 V6 Mitsubishi innovative valve-timing electronic control (Mivec) gasoline engine or a 163-horsepower, turbocharged and intercooled 3.2 liter 16-valve (fitted with a new common rail direct injection system) diesel engine.

"Every SUV fanatic knows the heritage behind the Pajero, a 12-time overall winner—including seven straight from 2001 until now—of the Dakar Rally, the world's most gruelling off-road race. Every useful information and technology derived from this race has trickled down into this 4th generation Pajero," said Dytianquin.

The all-new Pajero, which is imported from Japan, gets a new look that MMC hopes will entice previous buyers back to the Pajero.

The gasoline variant sells at P2.588 million while the diesel at P2.688 million.

Another strong bet

Designed and built in the United States, the Endeavor is another strong bet MMTC hopes to be their key in dominating the country's mid-sized SUV market.

For this edition, Mitsubishi's Endeavor receives a fresh front end accentuated by a new, stylish chrome grille, and there's a new styling of the rear bumper and the addition of a rear bumper extension.

The Endeavor is what is known as a crossover—a vehicle built from a car platform, but with the look and most of the interior space of an SUV.

"The Endeavor is one of the few crossovers having the look and feel of a rugged off-road SUV, yet with the ride, handling and power of a midsize sports sedan," said Arlan Reyes MMTC assistant manager for advertising and promotions.

Based on this writer's first impressions, the Endeavor (which shares the same platform of Mitsubishi Galant and Eclipse) felt light and stiff, tracks straight while it does not feel top-heavy in turns. Its impressive 255 horsepower—courtesy of its 3.8 liter 24-valve V6 gasoline engine—translated into quick off-the-line starts and should provide ample passing power when needed.

The P2.150-million Endeavor is also equipped with a 650-watt Rockford Fosgate sound system with six in-dash CD/MP3/tuner with nine speakers including a subwoofer (Rockford Fosgate is a world leader in the design and manufacturing of high-end automobile sound equipment).

Car-based design

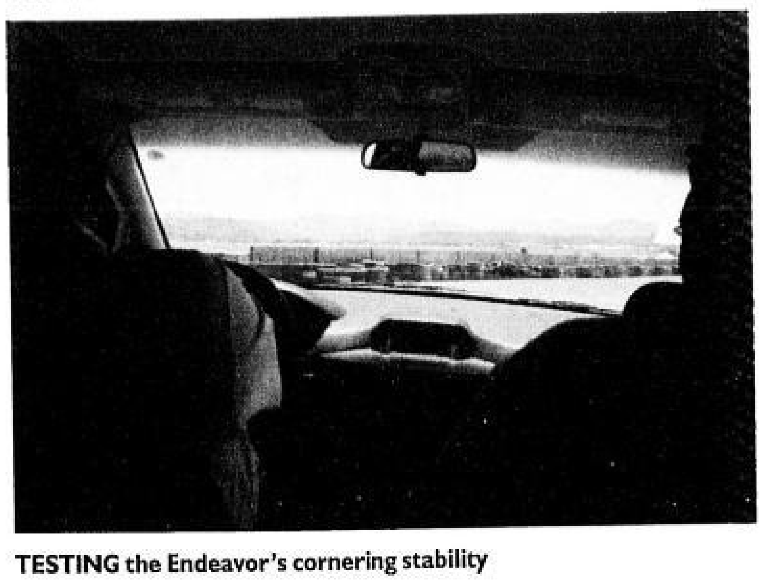
Like Endeavor, the compact Outlander has a car-based design (sharing its underpinnings with Mitsubishi's much-touted Lancer) that translates into good handling and a comfortable ride on paved roads.

This second-generation Outlander is a solid choice if you're shopping for a compact SUV. It has the available all-wheel-drive system, high driving position and versatile cargo space that car buyers have come to expect from this segment, but sets itself apart with its European-inspired styling, advanced technology and lively handling.

Imported here as a completely built-up unit from Japan, the Outlander comes in two variants: the P1.488 million GLS and the P1.688 million GLS Sport.

Both variants are powered by an all-new, all-aluminum 3.0 Mivec, 24-valve V6 gasoline engine (mated to a 6-speed automatic transmission) that delivers 220 horsepower.

While both variants are nearly identical exterior-wise as well as in its interior appointments, the GLS Sport comes equipped with a 650-watt Rockford Fosgate sound system with six in-dash CD/MP3/tuner with nine speakers (including a rear 10-inch subwoofer).



TESTING the Endeavor's cornering stability

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Optra Sedan 1.6 SS Manual	₱793,000	₱80,000
Optra Sedan 1.6 SS Automatic	₱833,000	₱84,000
Optra Wagon 1.6 SS Manual	₱863,000	₱87,000
Optra Wagon 1.6 SS Automatic	₱903,000	₱91,000

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- Roof spoiler (for Chevrolet Optra Wagon 1.6 SS only)
- Tonneau car & cargo net (for Chevrolet Optra Wagon only)

*For Chevrolet Optra Sedan 1.6 LS Manual
Promo ends on May 31, 2007. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1912, Series of 2007.

CHEVROLET

Aida Sevilla Mendoza is out of the country. Her column will resume next week.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

14 lessons. . .

From page B2-1

sit back and drive it like any automatic transmission car. The computer does all the "mixing."

3 **Sensors are present on almost all controls including accelerator pedal, hybrid battery and CVT transmission.** They also sense the load of the car. The hybrid ECU (electric control unit similar to the CPU of a personal computer) acts as a brain that determines how much power is needed to be drawn from the engine and how much from the electric motor.

4 **Stopping produces energy.** The Prius' regenerative braking technology means that when drivers step on the brakes, the motor connected to the tire becomes a generator, too as the Prius is able to rechannel that braking energy to the motor. Ingenious, isn't it?

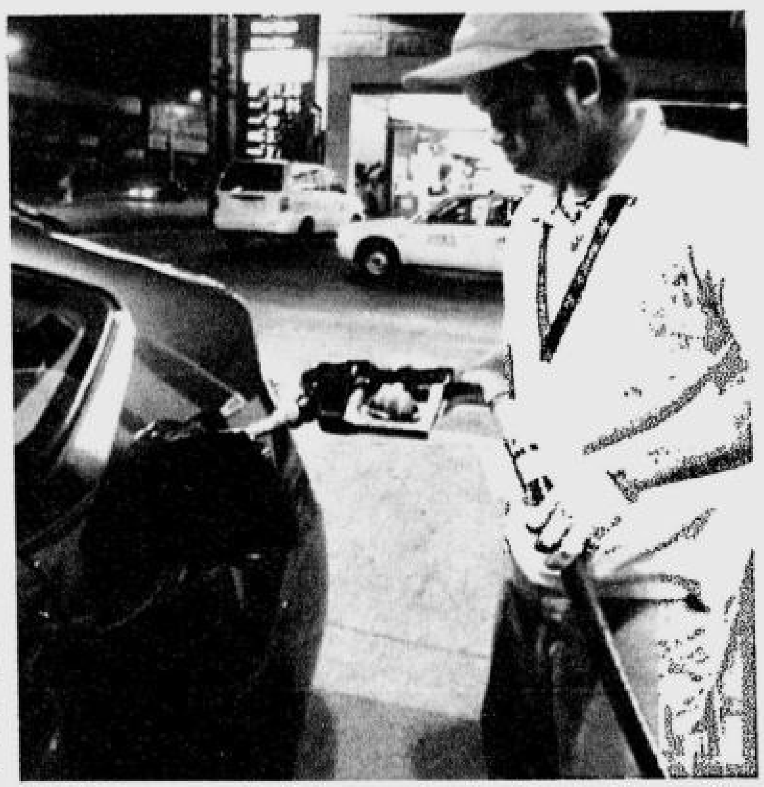
5 How can a 1.5-liter Prius, with a body as big as a 1.8-liter Altis, feel like it's been transplanted with an engine of a two-liter sedan especially during uphill runs? The answer lies in its double engines. The gasoline engine may produce a measly 77 horses, but when you combine that with the 68 horses of the electric engine, you effectively harness over 114 horses (the peak of power). The electric motor's characteristic high torque is also an immense help on the uphill (both engines work during steep climbs).

6 **The power-on switch is like turning on a personal computer.** That takes some getting used to. You don't turn any keys here. Just push a button, and wait for the display to say "ready." That same button also "shuts down" the engine.

'I'M not filthy rich. I'm greenly rich!' Bragging rights nowadays is having a car with a logo like this.

Even more fascinating is Prius' key, which looks more like an oversized USB. And we didn't have to put that key in the fob, or slot, in the car. Just by having that key in your person, the car senses it and you can unlock the doors just by touching them and turn the engines on directly with the button.

7 **The Prius shows its environment-friendly side when it's going slow.** That means, in stop-and-go urban rides, it actually consumes less gasoline per kilometer compared to smaller engine cars. The electric motor is programmed to take over during slow runs. However, at certain cruising speeds, the electric motor can run the car on its own. Ever heard the sound of silence? It's running on smooth asphalt at 80 kph and hearing nothing but wind being sliced.



EVERY drop counts. Total Shaw attendant loads up the Prius and Vios LPG.

8 **Don't panic when you hear nothing from the engine bay.** As long as your on-board computer says it's running, it is running. The shift from gasoline engine to electric engine when the car is slowing down while entering the expressway tollgate can be subtle but noticeable, the feeling that *tinirikan ka ng makina* (the engine stopped) comes to mind. But you do get used to it in a Prius.

9 **The Prius Atkinson's cycle overexpanded engine (modified) was designed specifically to be hybrid, according to professional passengers UP mechanical engineering professors Alexander P. Paran and Edwin N. Quiros.**

The Atkinson's cycle engine's compression stroke has been shortened because the intake valve is closed late so that the fuel becomes an overexpanded gas, which is bad if you need torque. However, the electric motor's strength in low-end torque more than compensates for this problem.

10 **The continuously variable transmission (CVT) for smooth shock-less transmission at all speed ranges is not new, except that in the Prius the CVT does not use belts but a planetary gear system.**

Ordinary CVTs are run by cone pulleys that expand or contract and a belt rides over those pulleys so the car effectively creates an infinitely variable gear ratio. The problem with this is that the belt wears out sooner or later. A purely geared system such as that of the Prius does away with the belt, eliminating the need to replace troublesome belts..

11 When the electric battery is running low (at two bars or less), the gasoline engine turns on for a few minutes and charges the battery.

12 **We did a comparative fuel run between the Prius, the 1.5-liter Vios, and the LPG-fueled 1.3-liter Vios.** Here are the results: On highway drive, the Prius' mileage was at 27 km/liter, the Vios 1.5 at 20 km per liter (driven at the same time on the same route); in city driving (rush hour between 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.) the Prius registered 20 km per liter, Vios 1.3-liter LPG dished out 12 km per liter (driven convoy style). A fuel consumption run in the United States showed that Prius' mileage is 30 to 35 km/liter.

To save fuel costs, the cars tested during the highway runs were loaded at Total Vito Cruz which, during the Holy Week, gave the highest fuel discounts among all fuel stations at P3 per liter. The city runs were fueled by Total on Shaw Boulevard (which offers the first LPG refueling station among all Total stations).

13 **There's an EV mode on the left side of the dashboard near the side-view mirror.** Pushing this EV button gives the driver full-time electric power for speeds up to 42 kph for as far as 3 km, or depending on the battery charge levels.

14 **The aircon can still run even if the engine's off.** This is because the aircon's compressor is electric powered.

It definitely sounds like Toyota has exhausted all possible means to keep the Prius as environment-friendly as possible. If only it could be as pocket-friendly as well.

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MOTORSCOPE

Honda Cars Makati sweeps Top in Sales awards

HONDA CARS MAKATI INC. SWEPT THE TOP IN SALES AWARDS DURING the 2007 Honda dealers convention held recently at the Expo Filipino, Clark Field, Pampanga. HCMI's Honda Cars Alabang branch was marked as the dealer with the highest volume of vehicles sold and awarded for having outstandingly met Honda Cars Philippines Inc.'s sales targets.

Recognized during the convention were associates Rocell Ong and Joan Denise Valdez of Honda Cars Makati (HCM) as two of the top sales executives, and Maricar Ricalde of Honda Cars Pasig (HCP) as one of the top sales supervisors. HCM's Isagani Baybay remained undefeated as the No. 1 Top Sales Supervisor of the year.

Honda Automobile Lifetime Sales Record awards were given to HCMI sales executives Dexter Gary Flores, Gino Carlo Angeles, Dennis James Enriquez, Monica Sangalang, Ma. Eliza Fulgencio and Niño Anthony Castro, all of whom have sold at least 500 units since 1999.

Wet Look warranty covers insurance repairs

IT ALREADY OFFERS THE LONGEST WARRANTY ON PAINT WASHOVERS. Now Wet Look, the authority in car refinishing, is offering the longest warranty even on repairs.

Danny Tuason, president of Wet Look, said car owners have more reasons to line up at their shop on Batangas Street, Makati, because Wet Look now gives a 2-year warranty on all repairs, regardless if it's being paid by an insurance company or not.

Tuason said all repair jobs would be covered by a warranty certificate that contains the repair details, including the code of the paint used. The code is Wet Look's guide to easily know the paint mixture for a certain color. Every code represents a unique paint mixture—no guesswork involved.

Wet Look continues to utilize only premium European 2k paints, from primers, to color coating and topcoat clears—the main reason its paint jobs remain sparkling even after being exposed to the elements for more than two years.

Passion, evolution, revolution with Castrol Edge

CASTROL EDGE RECENTLY MADE ITS LOCAL DEBUT WITH A TURBO-charged kickoff party for the Castrol Circuit Bar Tour, much to the delight of an ecstatic crowd at the hip club Embassy.

The night spelled passion, evolution and revolution as Castrol wowed everyone with its latest television commercial showcasing the full-on adventure and adrenaline-pumping action of the Castrol Edge lifestyle.

Celebrities and stars were all in Castrol mode, wearing exclusive Castrol Edge Baller Bands while partying the night away with music from the club's most happening turntables. The BMW Car Club Philippines provided more eye candy to Castrol's party people when it brought along its prized cars for display at the venue's parking lot.

Castrol kept the excitement level high as it gave away free drinks and special prizes to guests who successfully spelled out what Castrol is all about. It's more than just oil, it's liquid engineering.

Castrol Edge 5W40 premium oils are available in 1-liter and 4-liter packs.

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The 2bU! ballot box

2bU! rocks election time with a special that we hope will inspire you to actively participate in the upcoming polls. This issue is packed with election-related stories: your own thoughts on the polls courtesy of Rock Ed Radio, our protest against those who bombard our phones with propaganda, a senatorial debate and things you can do to make a difference. Like logging on to www.vote.ph and joining "Malinis, Please!" an arts, film, photography and music festival tomorrow at the Amoranto Stadium that aims to rally for clean elections. It doesn't matter if you're too young to actually cast your vote. Election time is yours too and there is always something you can do.

2BU! SURVEY

Who's your favorite politician?

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

IN A COUNTRY WHERE POLITICIANS are usually regarded as money-hungry, self-serving and two-faced liars, I didn't expect to get a lot of replies when I asked people about their favorite politicians. Surprisingly, there was a deluge of answers. While some gave funny ones, most of the respondents enumerated accomplishments, strengths and other enviable traits that make their fave politicians deserving of a seat in the government. Other people may find the following answers questionable, but one thing is definite: The youth of today know what they want in their leaders. I hope the hopefuls are reading this.

My favorite politician is the late Senator Raul Roco. He's the president the country never had. **–Carlo Francia**

Antonio Trillanes. He's strong and determined. He fought for their rights regardless of the consequences and will surely fight for ours. **–Aaron JP Almadro**

Chiz Escudero. He's my favorite because he seems to have the heart and objectives of a great and incorruptible politician. He seems to have a stand and the conviction to be a very good legislator. His being a lawyer gives him the edge to know what laws are to be passed and implemented. **–Melo Acelajado**

Joker Arroyo and Chiz Escudero. Both of them fight for what they believe is right. **–Pia de Villa**

The only politician I admire and respect is FVR because of his involvement in peace and rural development. **–Thea Aragon**

Way Kurat! Is that his name? The congressman from Cagayan *ata*. He's grounded and real. No politician trappings at all. I can't vote *ha*. **–Jay Canlas**

I like Kiko Pangilinan because he stands by his principles. **–Jasmine Bautista**

Loren Legarda, because of her crisp white shirts. Kidding. **–Maeyahn Aguilar**

Chiz Escudero. Young, smart, strong, independent and his looks taken aside, he has set up goals for Filipinos that are attainable and believable enough. He doesn't need anyone's power to make it because he knows he is in for the betterment of the country. **–NJ Torres**

Joker Arroyo! *Kasi pag* bad *ka*, *lagot ka*! He is someone with convictions and openly fights for what he thinks is right. He never does something for publicity stunts. I hope he gets reelected. **–Aly Piamonte**

I like Chiz Escudero because he's charismatic, smart, very calm and has fresh ideas. I can't recall an instance when he loses temper over an irritating issue thrown at him. **–Nico Estrella**

Joker Arroyo. He is credible for me. **–Anna Ruth de Guzman**

My favorite politician is Miriam Santiago because she is just so damn hilarious and wears her psychosis on her sleeves. (Arguments on the usefulness of politicians are moot at this point. That is, apart from general entertainment.) **–Jacs Sampayan**

Joker Arroyo because he's not running just for GMA's impeachment like the GO candidates. On the other hand, he's not a puppet like the other Team Unity candidates. He stood by what he believed in, has served well and has already proven himself. **–Gabbie Ricafort**

President Macapagal-Arroyo is the epitome of today's empowered woman! I have always looked up to her even when she was my professor at the Ateneo de Manila. I believe in her ideals for a stronger republic! **–Greggy Vera Cruz**

Joker Arroyo! Because he looks like a little boy when he smiles and a dragon when

WHO'S/ C3

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BY JIM DAVIS

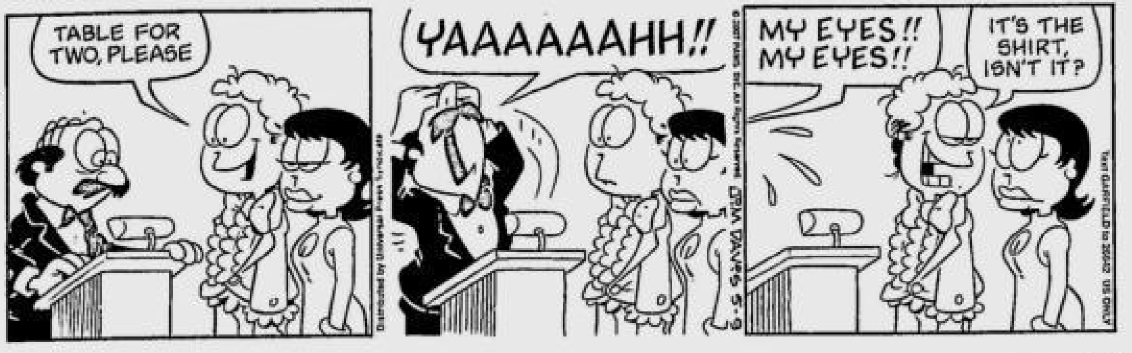
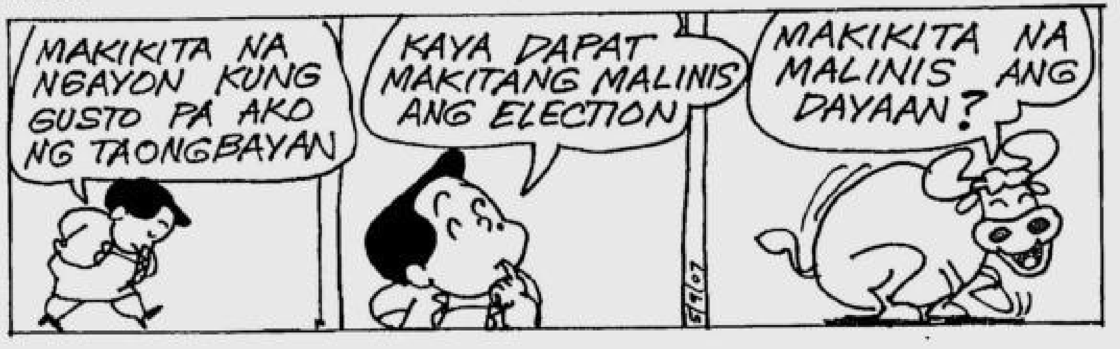


TABLE FOR TWO, PLEASE
YAAAAAAAHH!!
MY EYES!! MY EYES!!
IT'S THE SHIRT, ISN'T IT?

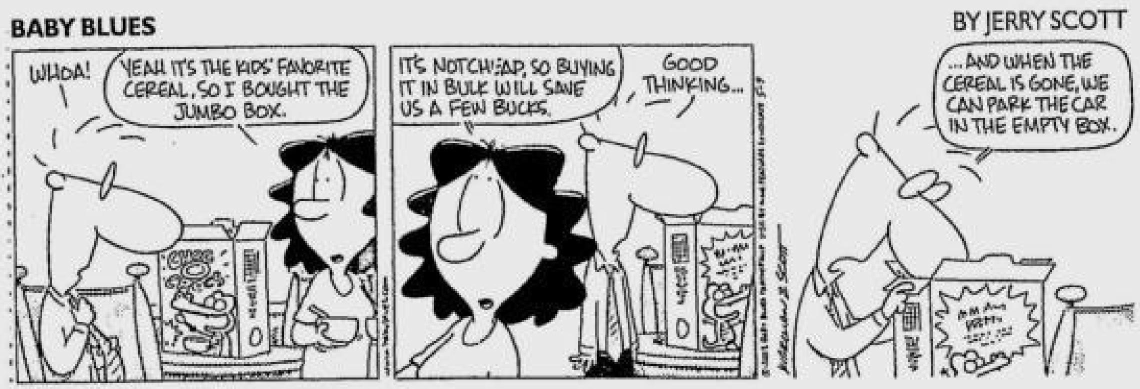
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAKIKITA NA NGAYON KUNG GUSTO PA AKO NG TAONGBAYAN
KAYA DAPAT MAKITANG MALINIS ANG ELECTION
MAKIKITA NA MALINIS ANG DAYAAN?
5/9/07

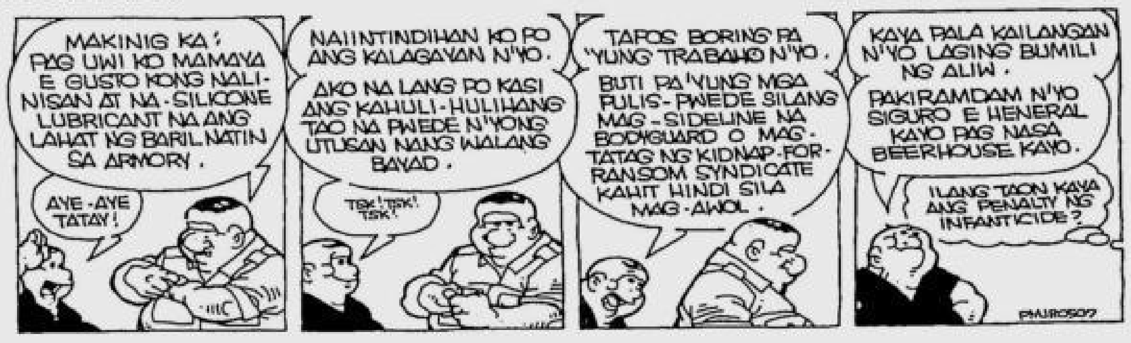
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHOA!
YEAH IT'S THE KIDS' FAVORITE CEREAL, SO I BOUGHT THE JUMBO BOX.
IT'S NOT CHEAP, SO BUYING IT IN BULK WILL SAVE US A FEW BUCKS.
GOOD THINKING...
...AND WHEN THE CEREAL IS GONE, WE CAN PARK THE CAR IN THE EMPTY BOX.

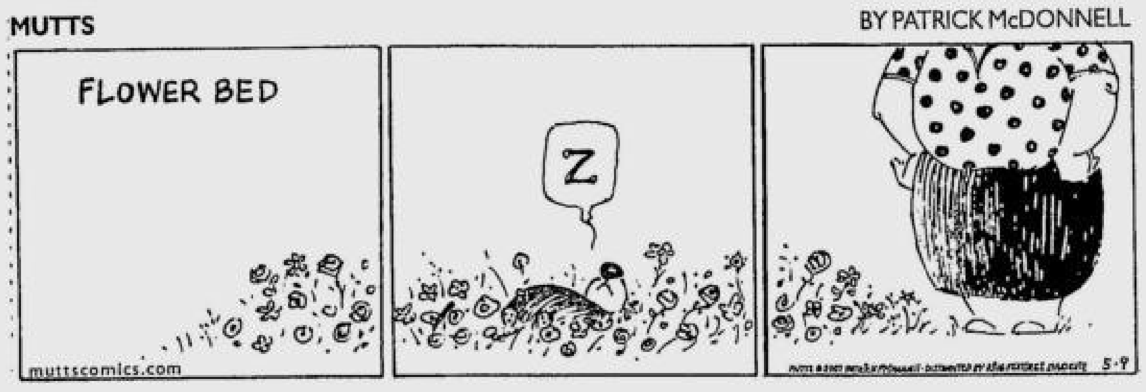
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MAKINIG KA: PAG UWI KO MAMAYA E GUSTO KONG NALINISAN AT NA-SILICONE LUBRICANT NA ANG LAHAT NG BARIL NATIN SA ARMORY.
AYE-AYE TATAY!
NAIINTINDIHAN KO PO ANG KALAGAYAN N'YO.
AKO NA LANG PO KASI ANG KAHULI-HULIHANG TAO NA PWEDE N'YONG UTUSAN NANG WALANG BAYAD.
TSK! TSK! TSK!
TAPOS BORING PA 'YUNG TRABAHO N'YO.
BUTI PA 'YUNG MGA PULIS- PWEDE SILANG MAG-SIDELINE NA BODYGUARD O MAGTATAG NG KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM SYNDICATE KAHIT HINDI SILA MAG-AWOL.
KAYA PALA KAILANGAN N'YO LAGING BUMILI NG ALIW.
PAKIRAMDAM N'YO SIGURO E HENERAL KAYO PAG NASA BEERHOUSE KAYO.
ILANG TAON KAYA ANG PENALTY NG INFANTICIDE?
PMJR0507

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


FLOWER BED
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muttscomics.com
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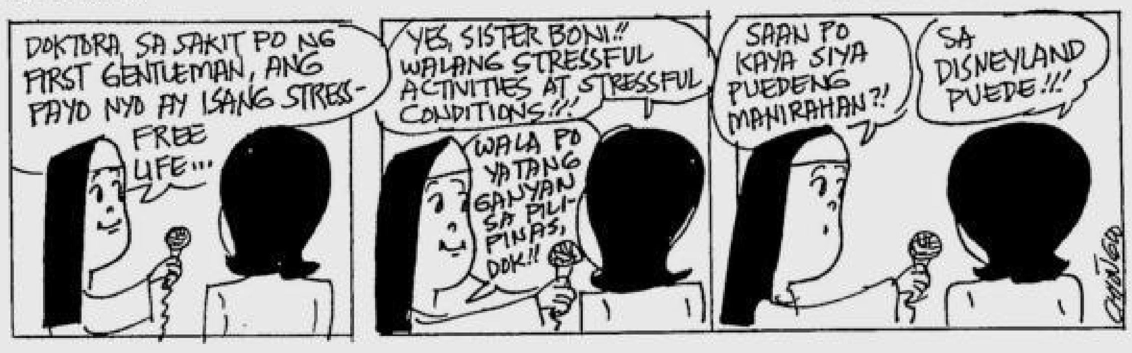
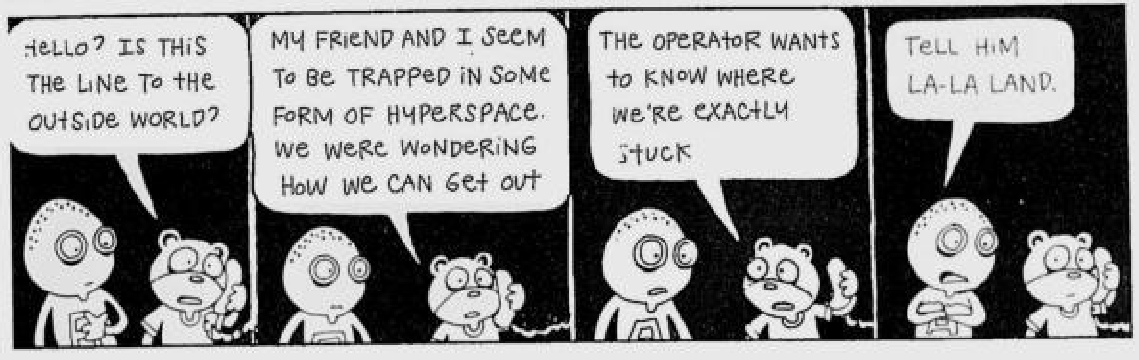
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DOKTORA, SA SAKIT PO NG FIRST GENTLEMAN, ANG PAYO NYO AY ISANG STRESS-FREE LIFE...
YES, SISTER BONI!! WALANG STRESSFUL ACTIVITIES AT STRESSFUL CONDITIONS!!!
WALA PO YATANG GANYAN SA PILIPINAS, DOK!!
SAAN PO KAYA SIYA PUEDENG MANIRAHAN?!
SA DISNEYLAND PUEDE!!!
CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY

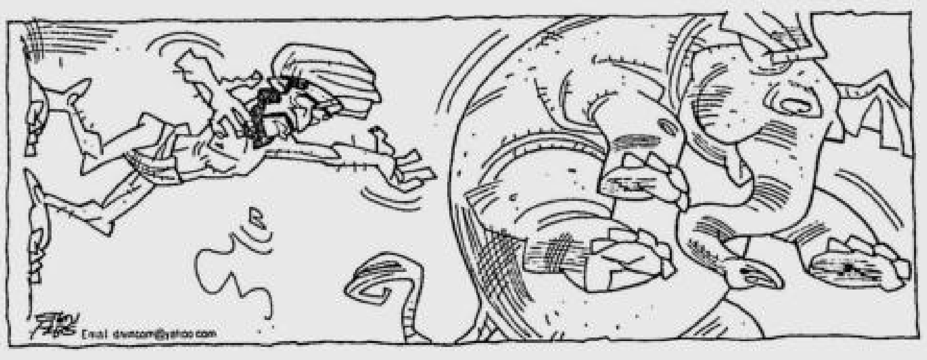
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HELLO? IS THIS THE LINE TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD?
MY FRIEND AND I SEEM TO BE TRAPPED IN SOME FORM OF HYPERSPACE. WE WERE WONDERING HOW WE CAN GET OUT
THE OPERATOR WANTS TO KNOW WHERE WE'RE EXACTLY STUCK
TELL HIM LA-LA LAND.

DIVINE COMEDY

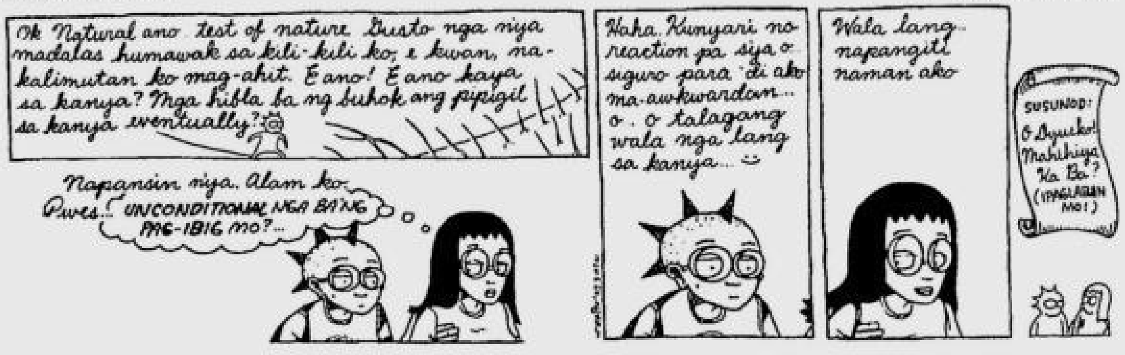
BY STEVEN PABALINAS

NAG-LEVITATE ANG ISANG ELEPANTE DAHIL SA TELEKINETIC POWERS NI SWAMI ZATARA. KASO NGA LANG, NAWALA ANG CONCENTRATION NYA NANG MAY PUMASOK NA LANGAW SA ILONG NYA KAYA SYA AY NAPISAT


Email: divincom@yahoo.com

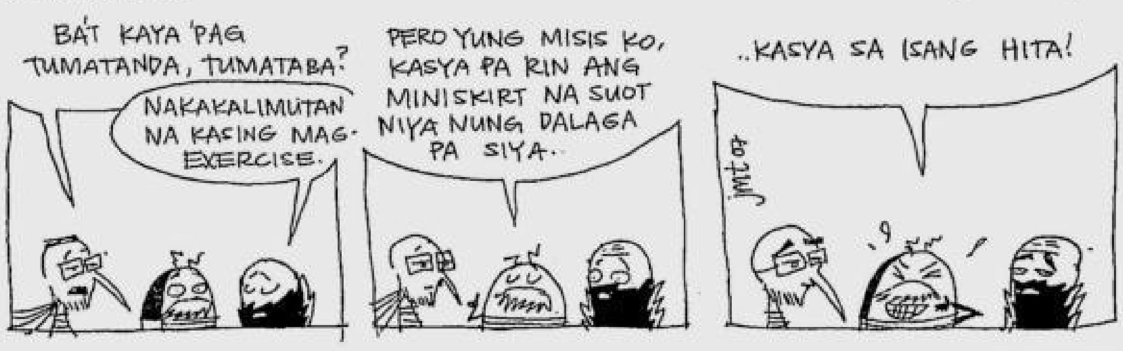
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


Ok Natural ano test of nature. Gusto nga niya madalas humawak sa kili-kili ko, e kwan, nakalimutan ko mag-ahit. E ano! E ano kaya sa kanya? Mga hibla ba ng buhok ang pipigil sa kanya eventually?
Napansin niya. Alam ko. Pwes... UNCONDITIONAL NGA BA'NG PAG-IBIG mo?...
Haha. Kunyari no reaction pa siya o siguro para 'di ako ma-awkwardan... o.. o talagang wala nga lang sa kanya...
Wala lang.. napangiti naman ako
SUSUNOD: O Byucko! Mahihiya Ka Ba? (IPAGLABAN MO!)

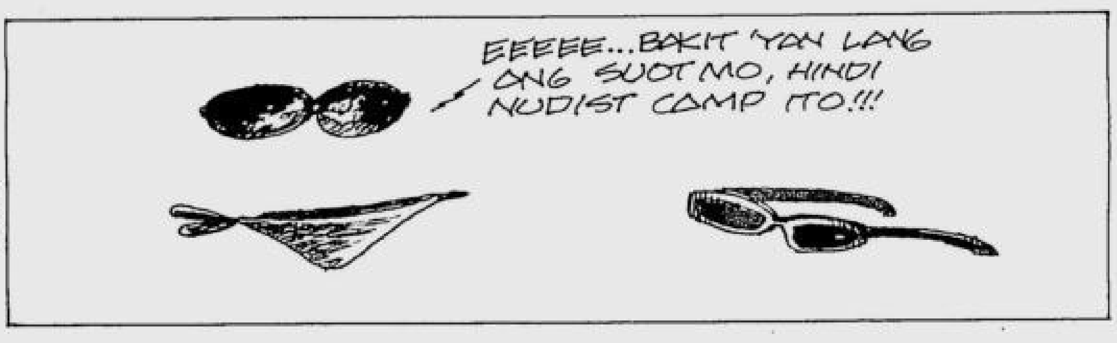
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BA'T KAYA 'PAG TUMATANDA, TUMATABA?
NAKAKALIMUTAN NA KASING MAG-EXERCISE.
PERO YUNG MISIS KO, KASYA PA RIN ANG MINISKIRT NA SUOT NIYA NUNG DALAGA PA SIYA..
..KASYA SA ISANG HITA!
jmt 07

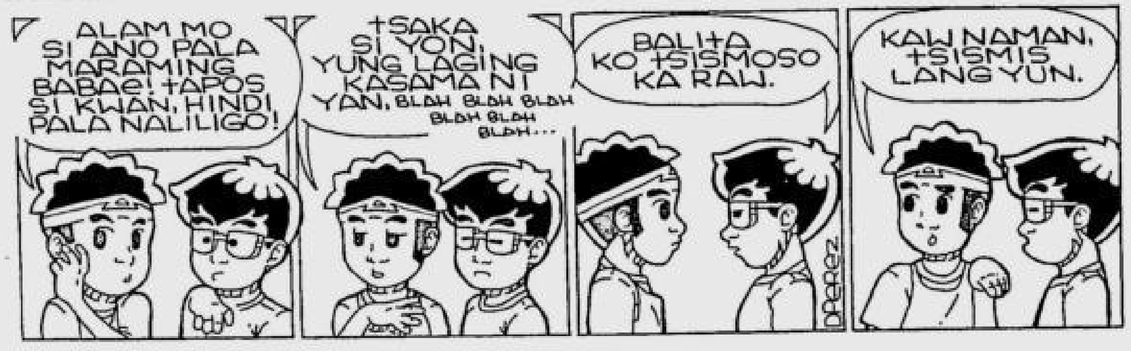
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

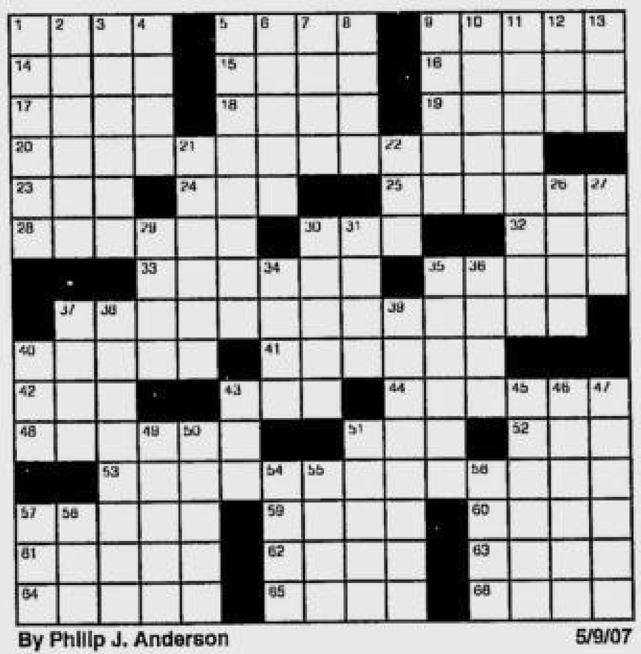

EEEEE...BAKIT 'YAN LANG ANG SUOT MO, HINDI NUDIST CAMP ITO!!!

SALAMIN

BY DARWIN PEREZ


ALAM MO SI ANO PALA MARAMING BABAE! TAPOS SI KWAN, HINDI PALA NALILIGO!
TSAKA SI YON, YUNG LAGING KASAMA NI YAN, BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH...
BALITA KO TSISMOSO KA RAW.
KAW NAMAN, TSISMIS LANG YUN.
DPEREZ

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

5/9/07

ACROSS
1 Actor Omar
5 Killer whale
9 Colorado ski resort
14 Last gasp
15 West African country
16 French capital in an old song
17 Composer Khachaturian
18 James Bond's alma mater
19 Supporting loop
20 Course for a hostess?
23 Actor Wallach
24 Old Olds
25 Pass through a membrane
28 Edit
30 Twelve doz.
32 Concur silently
33 Buddhist awakening
35 Young adults
37 Course for a carpenter?
40 Flee to wed
41 IRS submission
42 Stimpy's pal
43 Bottom line
44 Cups and saucers
48 Loose overcoat
51 Auction action
52 John's Yoko
53 Course for a real estate agent?
57 Range
59 Racer Luyendyk
60 Significant years
61 Philosopher Kierkegaard
62 Ploy
63 ___-majesty
64 Ministers to
65 Equal
66 Owner's paper

DOWN
1 Pencil end
2 Release conditionally
3 Serene
4 Partial: pref.
5 Egg dish, British style
6 "Midnight Cowboy" role
7 Blood formation
8 Indigenous people of Japan
9 Orbital point
10 Oregon capital
11 Confinee
12 Dusk, to Donne
13 Abbr. on a battery
21 Mysterious
22 Scooby-___
26 PlayStation maker
27 Asner and McMahon
29 Rush letters
30 Welcome
31 Public uprising
34 Grimm guy
35 Shipworm
36 Sicilian volcano
37 Earnest request
38 Texas steer
39 Rebel on the high seas
40 Goof
43 Vane dir.
45 Evening reception
46 Box up
47 Threw
49 Ran easily
50 Revival shouts
51 Idaho's capital
54 Tombstone marshal
55 Motley ___
56 Canasta combination
57 Mach+ jet
58 Miler Sebastian

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

E	D	I	E	■	S	H	O	A	T	S	■	D	A	B
M	E	N	S	■	L	O	W	C	U	T	■	A	G	E
B	A	S	Q	U	E	E	N	E	M	Y	■	R	U	E
E	R	E	■	P	E	R	U	■	■	E	S	K	E	R
D	E	T	E	S	T	■	P	R	I	S	O	N	■	■
■	■	■	S	H	Y	S	T	E	R	■	W	I	F	E
R	E	C	T	O	■	L	O	C	K	I	N	G	I	N
I	R	A	■	T	O	O	■	A	S	S	■	H	G	T
F	I	S	H	S	P	A	W	N	■	R	A	T	S	O
E	C	T	O	■	I	N	A	T	R	A	P	■	■	■
■	■	L	A	M	E	S	T	■	E	E	R	I	E	R
E	M	E	R	Y	■	■	E	L	U	L	■	C	P	O
A	A	A	■	N	A	I	R	O	B	I	S	H	O	P
S	Y	D	■	A	R	L	E	N	E	■	R	O	D	E
E	S	S	■	H	E	L	D	I	N	■	A	R	E	S

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5/9/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have strength in your speech and style of speaking. Your sense of justice makes you fight for the underdog. You have a good heart; you care about others. You love beauty in your surroundings and your possessions. You might work with antiques or in the arts. Expect a major change this year, perhaps as significant as around 1998. **Birthdate of:** Tony Gwynn, baseballer; Candice Bergen, actress; Billy Joel, singer

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Don't be too discouraged by the responsibilities for children or by a romantic relationship going sideways. It's easy to feel disappointed today; fortunately, this feeling passes quickly.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Conversations with family members—especially parents—could be trying today. No matter what you suggest or attempt, someone blocks your way. Just be patient.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): The support or approval that you wanted from the government is not forthcoming today. It appears that your plans are in the toilet. (This is just a temporary obstacle.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): A friend or perhaps someone older or more experienced wants to rain on your parade today. Don't let this happen. Go back to the drawing board and rethink things.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): It's difficult dealing with authority figures today. Just accept this. This is not the day to try to get your way about anything. (It's wise to choose your battles.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Religious or political dogma seems to halt you in your tracks today. Perhaps someone older is critical of you at school or in areas connected with publishing and the media. Just be cool.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The assistance, money or loan you hoped for might be blocked or stalled right now. Don't jump to conclusions. Don't let those who are older or more experienced discourage you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Discussions with partners and close friends are cautiously reserved today. People tend to hold back; they're cautious about opening up. Just do the best you can.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): It's not easy getting cooperation from co-workers or anyone else today. Everyone is busy hanging black crepe paper. Don't be critical of others, and don't react to criticism from others

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Someone might squelch some of your fun ideas today. Or perhaps someone older or more experienced is critical of your relationship to children. Give this little thought.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Discussions with parents or family members are difficult today. Everyone seems to be a bit of a wet blanket. Keep in mind that someone else might view you this way as well.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): It's easy to fall into negative thinking and worrying today. But this is exactly what you must not do.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		2	9	1	5	3		
	3						6	
5								
6								
4				8	1	5	9	7
7								2
3								9
	1						4	
		8	3	5	2	7		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/09

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

3	6	4	2	8	1	5	9	7
8	9	2	5	6	7	1	4	3
1	7	5	3	9	4	6	2	8
5	8	1	7	2	3	4	6	9
4	3	6	9	1	8	7	5	2
7	2	9	6	4	5	3	8	1
9	5	3	8	7	6	2	1	4
6	1	8	4	3	2	9	7	5
2	4	7	1	5	9	8	3	6

Difficulty Level ★★

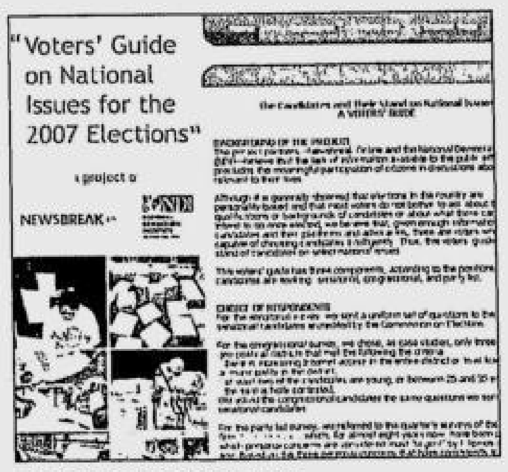
Information, please

By Jessica Hermosa
2bU! Contributor

KNOW THEIR JINGLES BY heart but have no clue what their platforms are? Don't know where to go on election day? Have no fear, online voter guides are here!

www.ivote.ph

"I think therefore I vote" is the catchy phrase plastered on the homepage of this youth-friendly website. Aside from the platforms of candidates for the Senate and House of Representatives and the advocacies of the partylists, the site also features helpful information for first-time voters such as where to go on election day, what to do if one's name is not on the voter's list, and how to guard one's vote. The site also has a handy compilation of news links, essays and primers on national issues, and a blog. World Youth Alliance, UP Lingkod Bayan, Junior Chamber International Makati and Channel News Asia are the forces behind this website.


"Voters' Guide on National Issues for the 2007 Elections"
a project o
NEWSBREAK

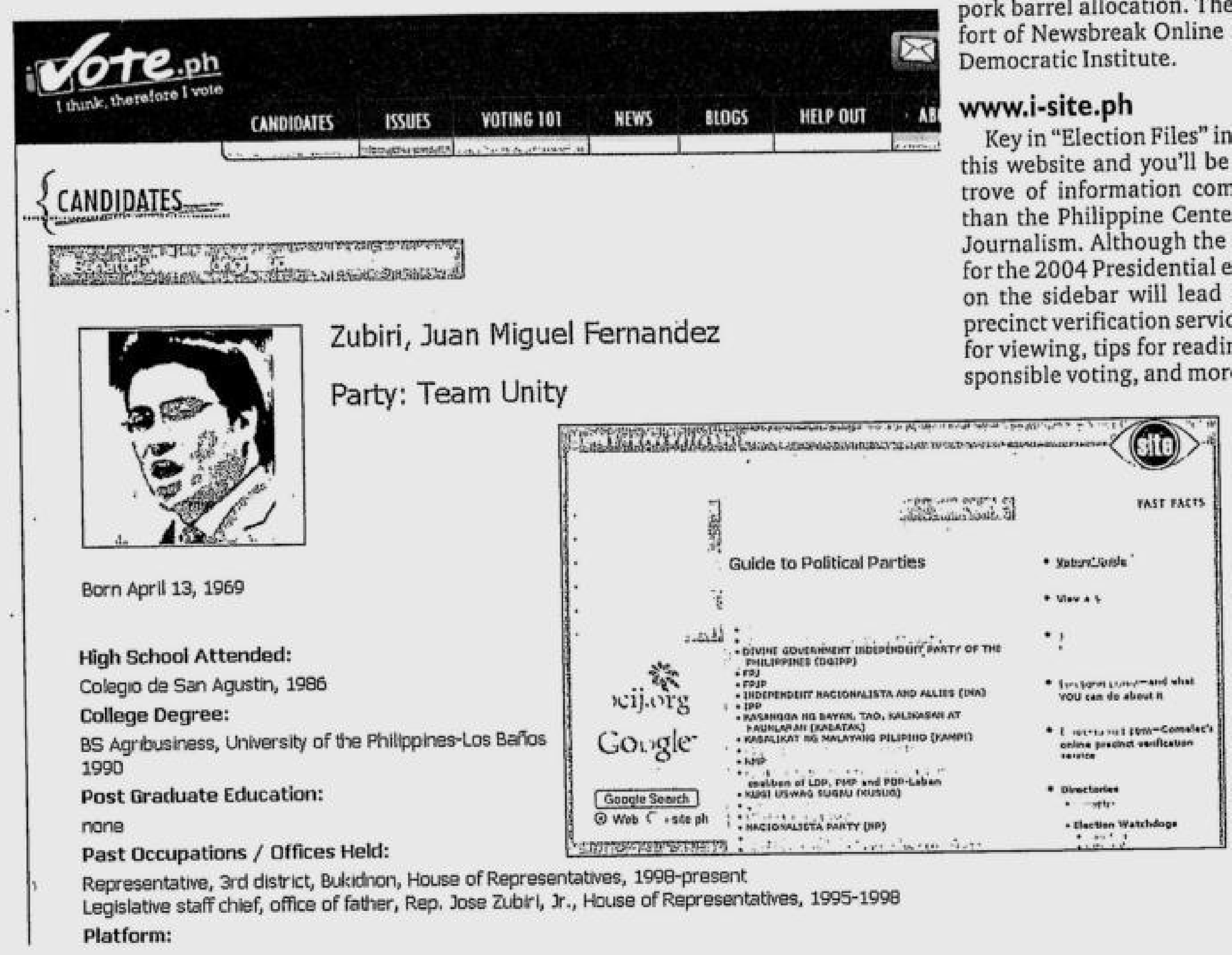
WWW.PHILVOTERS.NET

www.philvoters.net

This online voter's guide contains candidates' qualifications and their stand on select national issues—their legislative agenda for job security, their opinion on Charter Change, and how they plan to spend their pork barrel allocation. The site is a team effort of Newsbreak Online and the National Democratic Institute.

www.i-site.ph

Key in "Election Files" in the search box of this website and you'll be led to a treasure trove of information compiled by no less than the Philippine Center of Investigative Journalism. Although the page was created for the 2004 Presidential elections, the links on the sidebar will lead you to an online precinct verification service, a sample ballot for viewing, tips for reading surveys and responsible voting, and more.



Zubiri, Juan Miguel Fernandez

Party: Team Unity

Born April 13, 1969

High School Attended:
Colegio de San Agustin, 1986

College Degree:
BS Agribusiness, University of the Philippines-Los Baños 1990

Post Graduate Education:
none

Past Occupations / Offices Held:
Representative, 3rd district, Bukidnon, House of Representatives, 1998-present
Legislative staff chief, office of father, Rep. Jose Zubiri, Jr., House of Representatives, 1995-1998

Platform:

Guide to Political Parties

- DIVINE GOVERNMENT INDEPENDENT PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES (DGIPP)
- FPJ
- FPJP
- INDEPENDENT NACIONALISTA AND ALLIES (INA)
- IPP
- KASANGGA NG BAYAN, TAO, KALIKASAN AT FAUNLARAN (KABATAK)
- KABALIKAT NG MALAYANG PILIPINO (KAMPI)
- NMP
- coalition of LDP, PMP and PDP-Laban
- KUSI USWAG SUGBU (KUSUG)
- NACIONALISTA PARTY (NP)

- Directories
- Election Watchdogs

WWW.I-SITE.PH (inset) and www. ivote.ph

Who's your favorite politician?

From page C1

he's mad! –**John Unson**

Kiko Pangilinan. He has a good platform for the youth and a promising plan for economic growth. Add to that, he has the guts to run as an independent candidate. It only shows that he is confident and does not need any party to back him up. Just wife Sharon Cuneta by his side. –**Abbey Valenciano**

Chiz Escudero. Principled. –**Jana Vicente**

I guess it's Alan Cayetano. Clean image, catchy ten-sec ad. Short and effective, it shows he can use resources properly. New blood good for our system. –**Konrad Ong**

Ping Lacson because he's strict when it comes to law enforcement and is disciplined. But with the incumbent ones, it's Miriam Santiago because she's brilliant and crazy. –**Johnna Ramirez**

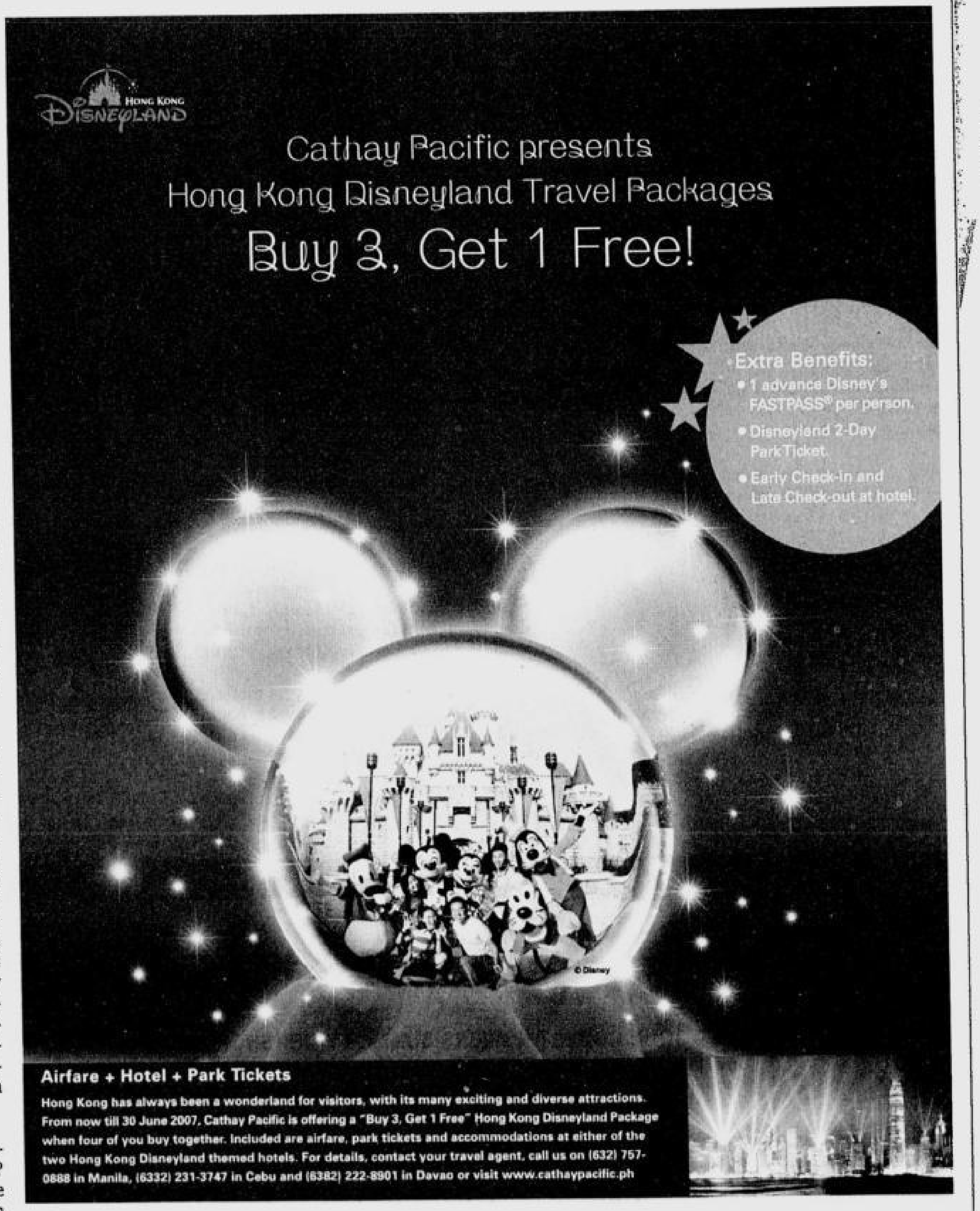
I'm impressed by Philippine Department of Tourism Secretary Ace Durano. He has set tangible goals for Philippine tourism and treats it as a marketing brand. His strategy to increase the number of tourists in the country works—the numbers talk. Chiz Escudero, too, for being a sports advocate. –**Georgina Rocha**

Ah, hmmm, my favorite politician? Since politics in the Philippines is a form of entertainment, I would have to say Erap Estrada is still my favorite politician. He still cracks me up. –**Jinno Rufino**

This is not a serious answer because there really isn't one particular politician that I like but I must say that Prospero Pichay's "Itanim sa Senado" tagline really did catch my attention. It's just too funny but it works! –**Alyanna Martinez**

I'm really in love with Mayor Fred Lim. He's a real man. You wouldn't hear anything bad about him or his work. A very decent and honest politician. –**Aubrey Miles**

E-mail the author at marksablan_2bu@yahoo.com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latest styles in swimwear
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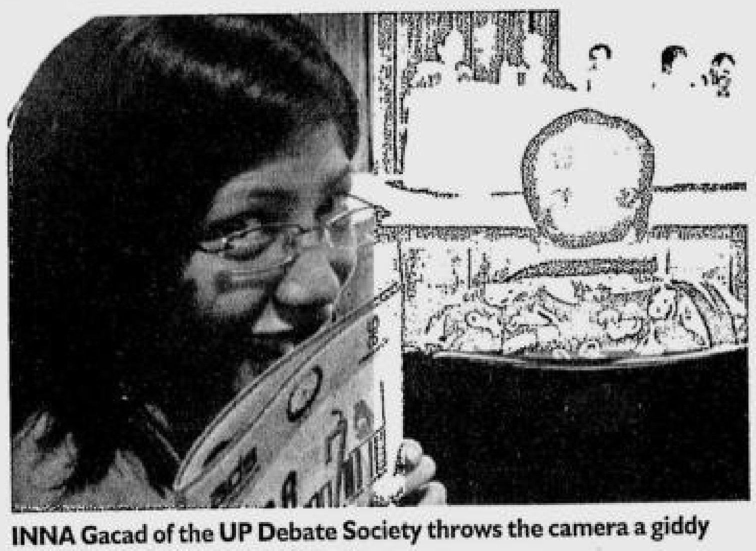


INNA Gacad of the UP Debate Society throws the camera a giddy grin while candidates speak on stage.

WHO SAYS the youth are uninvolved? Atenean debaters James Alcantara and Faith Raagas mingle with Namfrel's Guillermo Luz.

ROCO and Cayetano warm up outside the auditorium.

Youth grill candidates in debate forum

By Jessica Hermosa
2bU! Contributor

FIRST-TIME VOTERS, THOSE aged 18-21, are four million strong, according to Namfrel secretary-general Guillermo Luz. Youth voters, those aged 18-35, on the other hand, make up the majority of the voting public.

Because of their power, it is the youth's responsibility to get to know what the candidates stand for.

That's just what more than 100 college students did last April 25 when they attended DB8*2007, a debate among senatorial candidates organized by JCI Senate Manila, UP Debate Society and Ateneo Debate Society for the benefit of young first-time voters.

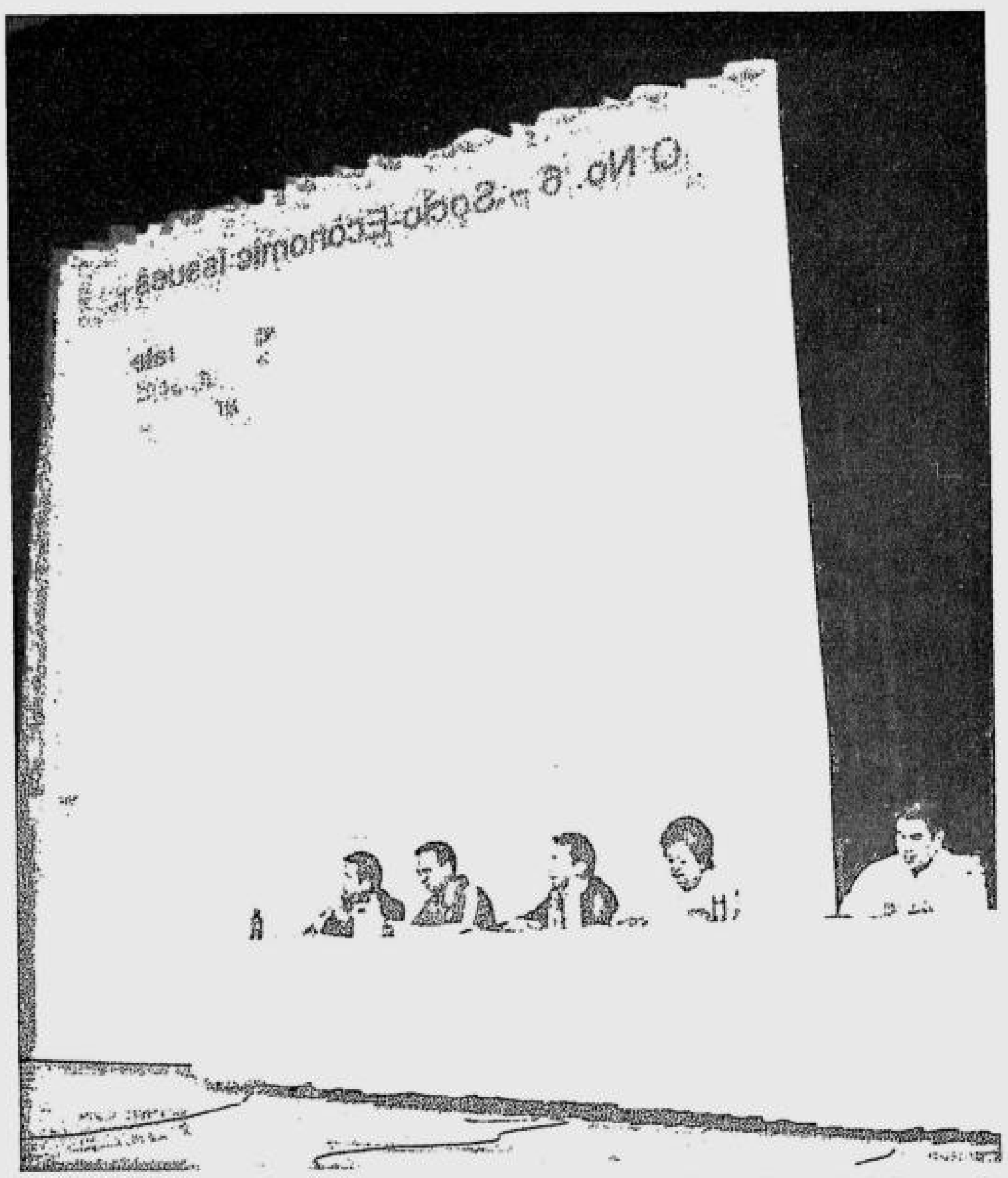
Five senatorial candidates participated in the event: Martin Bautista, Jesus Paredes, and Adrian Sison from Kapatiran, Sonia Roco from Genuine Opposition, and Alan Peter Cayetano.

The candidates were grilled by a panel made up of Tet Grajo from UP, Sharmila Parmanand from Ateneo, INQUIRER Opinion columnist Rina Jimenez-David, ABC5 news anchor Michael Toledo and Luz.

The questions ranged from "Tell us about your stand on artificial contraception" to "What is your opinion on government subsidies for state universities?" to "Why is your hair long?" (directed toward Paredes).

The candidates were expected to explain and argue on issues such as the population issue, brain drain, globalization, political dynasties, and the extralegal killings of journalists and activists.

Senate bets take part in a debate and get their message across to young voters



SENATORIAL candidates Jesus Paredes, Alan Peter Cayetano, Adrian Sison, Sonia Roco and Martin Bautista discuss population growth, among other topics.

Although they managed to cheekily plug a few campaign slogans in between questions, their answers were mostly direct to the point.

For instance, Paredes said his party was against any form of artificial contraception. (The answer to why his hair is long? "It's a symbol of my crusade versus graft and corruption.")

Cayetano, meanwhile, said that in the spirit of freedom of choice, he is not against artificial contraception. However, he doesn't want the government to shoulder the costs of contraceptives.

Regarding state subsidies for universities, for UP in particular, Roco said, "My stand here is that let's look deeply into how UP is being managed. Maybe they need to partly stand on their own, and be partly subsidized."

Sison, on the other hand, criticized the Arroyo administration for making debt payments top priority and proposed that the government "renegotiate with creditors to relieve bad debts."

Adding to this discussion of budget concerns, Bautista called for the repeal of the "dangerous" Automatic Appropriations Law, which allows the executive branch to make independent decisions on budget allocation.

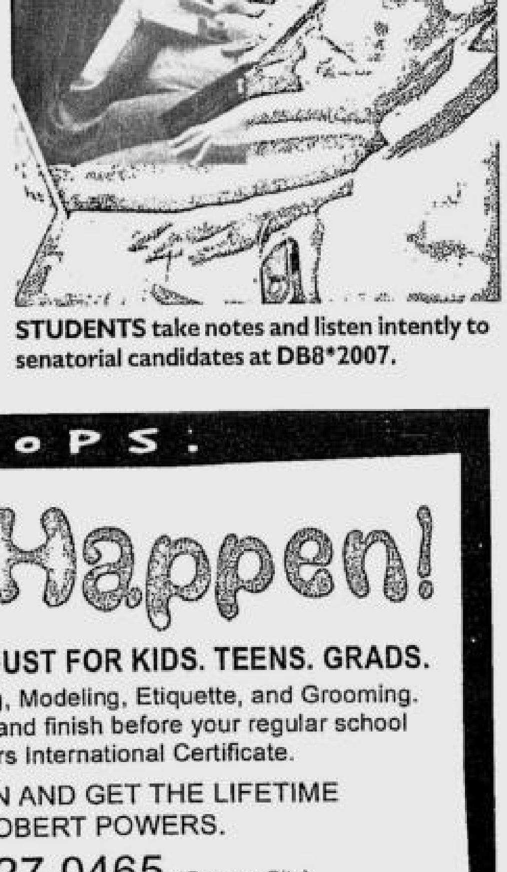
The sharp and thorough answers that are hard to find in mainstream media could very well be attributed to the debate format, which prodded the candidates to explain their platforms.

"Arguing does not necessarily mean people are angry with each other," said Leloy Claudio of the Ateneo Debate Society, explaining that debating actually aids in building democratic maturity.

"Public debates among candidates clarify the principles and beliefs they stand by," added Inna Gacad of the UP Debate Society.

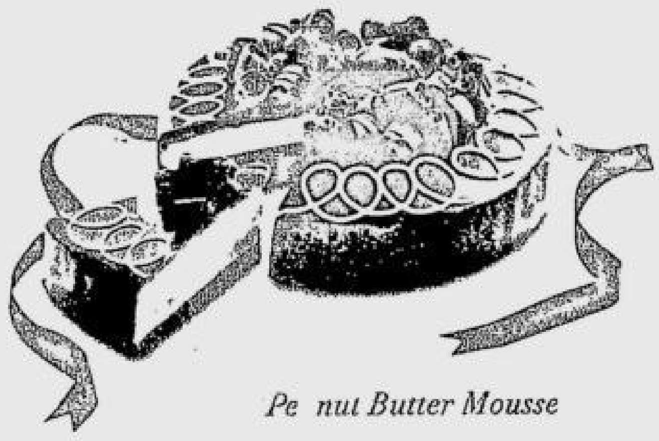
With inquiring minds, a critical habit and a drive to discern, participants of DB8*2007 disproved the stereotype of indifference attached to our generation. Hopefully, it will continue on in the youth's well-placed votes on election day.

*Weren't there at DB8*2007? Watch the video and hear what the senatorial candidates said by keying in "db82007" on www.youtube.com.*



STUDENTS take notes and listen intently to senatorial candidates at DB8*2007.

The New Mou S



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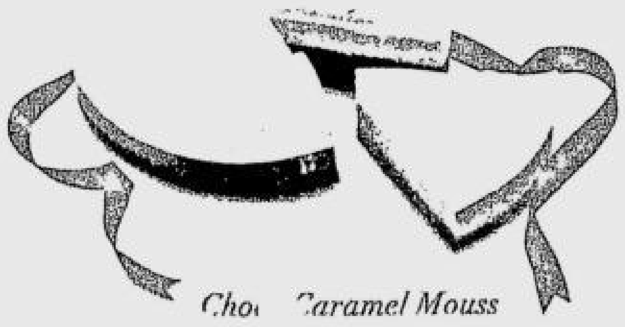

Cho Caramel Mouss

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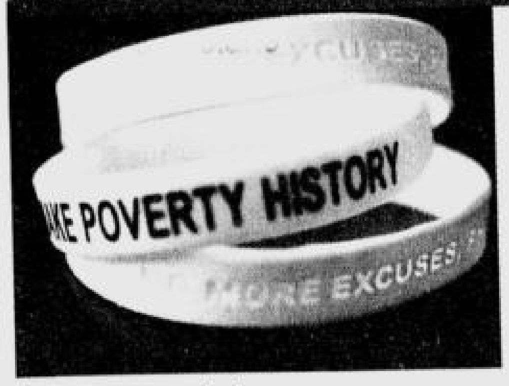
Let's rally for clean elections



Rock musicians, poets and artists gather to deliver the message of young Pinoys: 'honest and peaceful elections, please!'

AT SUNSET ON MAY 10, THE Thursday prior to the polls, young Filipinos will rally for clean elections.

"Malinis, Please!" is an arts, film, photography and music festival at the Amoranto Stadium.

The musicians of Rock Ed Philippines will perform: Noel Cabangon, Radioactive Sago Project, Paolo Santos, Joey Ayala, Cynthia Alexander, UpdharmaDown, Giniling Festival, Chicosci, Paramita, Kjwan, Kala, Greyhoundz, Peryodiko, Makatha, Kapatid, Stonefree and many more.

In between sets, there will be screenings of short films by Khavn de la Cruz, Pepe Diokno, John Torres.

Slideshows by veteran and young photographers like Luis Liwanag, VJ Villafranca, Paolo Picones, Jake Verzosa, Lomomanila and more will be on 50 large-format tarpaulins around the concert area and onscreen as well.

The poetry of National Artist Virgilio Almario and of young poets like Kris Lacaba will also be featured.

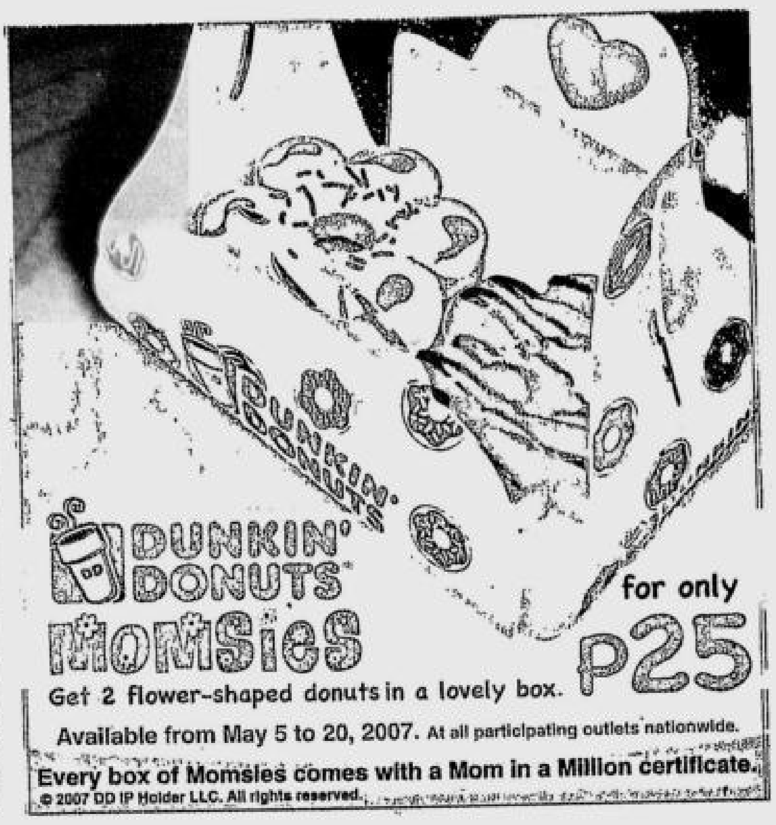
Visual artists will paint a mural on the spot while the concert goes on.

Everyone is encouraged to wear a white

LET'S/ D2

MUSIC TELEVISION

ROCK ED founder Gang Badoy and Randy David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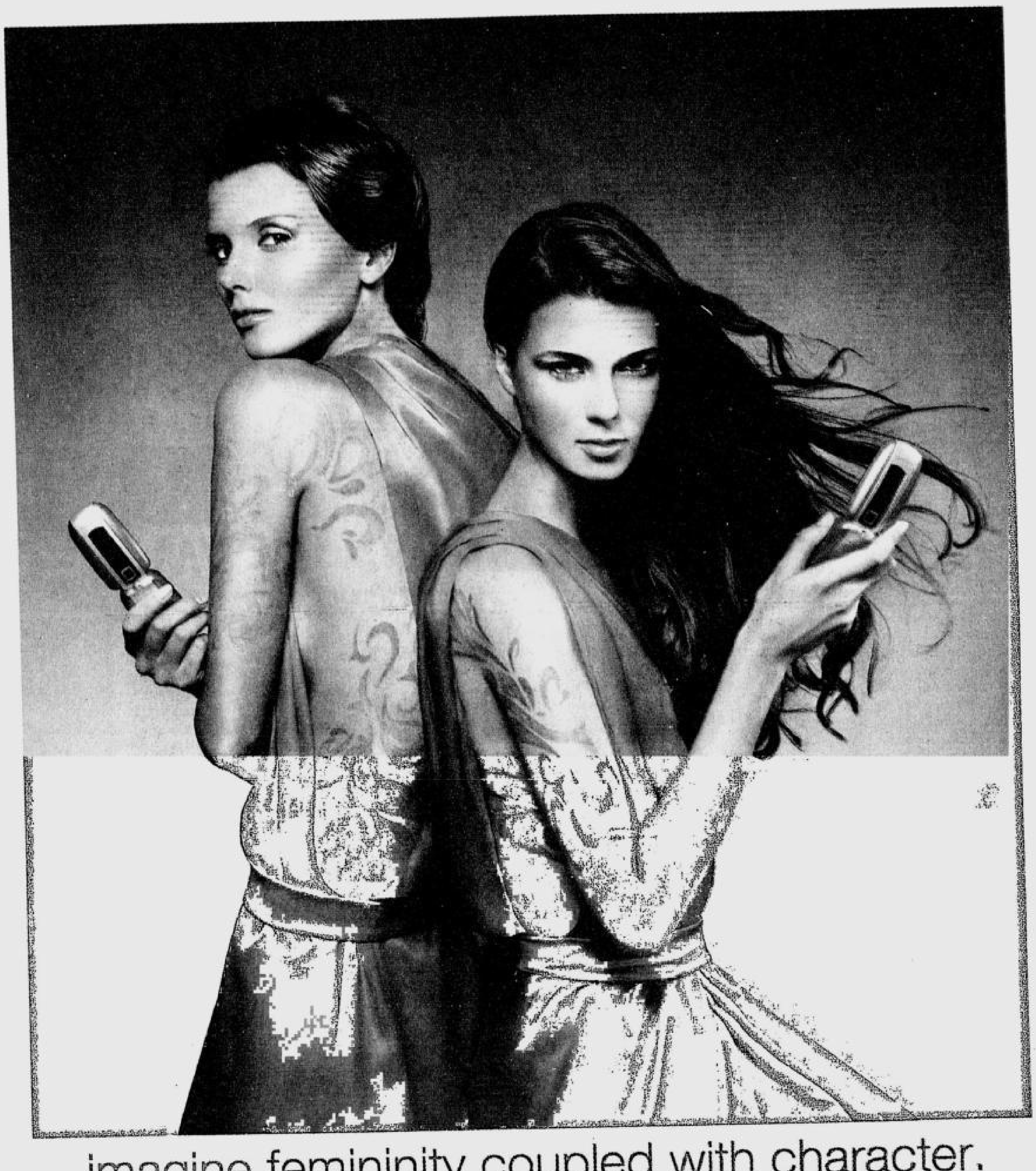
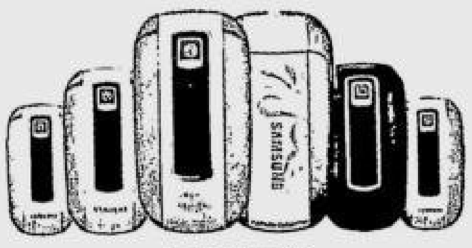
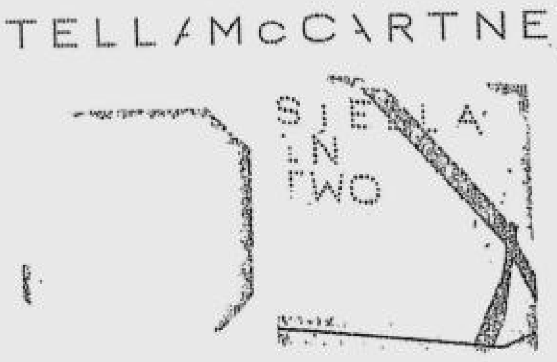
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How you feel about the elections

Rock Ed Radio on NU 107 finds out how young people see the upcoming polls

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ROCK THE RILES 2006

THE MANY faces and phases of Rock Ed's anti-apathy campaign

By Gang Badoy
2bU! Contributor

AH, ELECTIONS. YOU'VE SEEN AND heard them all, you say. And you must be tired.

My colleague, Lourd de Veyra (of the band Radioactive Sago Project) and I recently did a survey on reactions of young people to the upcoming elections. We did this through "Rock Ed Radio," a weekly socio-civic talk show that we host over at the home of NU Rock, NU107 FM.

Our respondents were listeners aged 14-45. They didn't realize that while they tuned in to us, we were tuned in to them, too.

Here are the most popular reactions to the coming elections:

1. "It's just a popularity contest. Only the famous stand a chance. The ugly ones lose."

While that may be true, it is interesting to note that there are smashingly good-looking senatorial candidates who are bona fide celebrities but are not quite making it to the magic list. And many who are not good-looking at all that make it, at least on the surveys.

Does that say something about us? Perhaps. The survey we took reflected this response: Many young voters now are not convinced by star status alone. They know there is much to be said about "training for a task" and that being a fantastic actor would not automatically make.for an effective lawmaker. They're looking for integrity, experience, expertise and vision.

Several said they want to see non-wealthy politicians hold office because they would understand the general plight compared to the usual public official who is part of the economic elite. But many more expressed the fear that less affluent officials would be more prone to stealing the coffers. (There's no monopoly in that field, you know. We've seen rich ones pillage as well.)

If it's a popularity tilt, then even that is our doing, agreed many. Maybe we haven't demanded enough from candidates to spit out concrete platforms. Blueprints of programs and plans have to be part of their campaign blast. We as voters should require platforms before toupees and toothpaste smiles on posters.

I know this is elementary, but it cannot be said enough, so I'll say it again. Demand platforms from your candidates.

2. "Public office is a family affair. It's the same last names, just the juniors and the daughters of the same old families. Are they any different?"

Good observation, though it doesn't take that much keenness to notice this. According to www.pcij.org ("New Political Dynasties" by Julio Teehankee), there are approximately 160 families who have called the two Houses of the Philippine Congress home for decades. Two or more family members have served in Congress and they count for a significant percentage of the men and women who have been elected to the national lawmaking body from 1907-2004.

Again, the respondents to our survey had mixed reactions to this. Majority of the respondents said these younger generation candidates cling to their last names, ride on the laurels, or worse, the notoriety of their forebears to win in the coming polls. But they are not necessarily better, smarter or more equipped. In fact, many of the young voters think that "*apelyido lang ang meron sila*."

Approximately 20 percent of the respondents said this was okay because the business of legislation is best assigned to someone whose family has become familiar with the task. If one grew up in a family of lawmakers, maybe it made one adept at the work.

Some others said it didn't matter to them. If people are good in the job, why persecute them just because they are sons and daughters of so and so? It's not so in the last name as in the efficacy of the product. *Parang* Choc-nut *yan. Walang* TV ad, *walang* radio jingle, *walang* posters *o* T-shirt *o* tagline, *pero matatag kasi talagang masarap*.

3. "The tactic of branding a candidate during campaigns is taken too far. It's illusory! Deceptive, at best."

In advertising, a top priority of the campaign team is to have the candidate's name remembered. Recall is all important.

I've had the opportunity of voting twice in my life, and I must admit I just wrote down names that were familiar to me. In fact, the first time I voted, I didn't prepare at all. A ghastly mistake. I regret it even now.

Please do not make this mistake. Study the candidates. Read about them. Find more than one source of the news. There are always several angles to a story as there are with a person. If there are debates on TV, watch them! Listen to the candidates talk. Ask yourself what you like about a certain candidate's platform. Is he or she an advocate of causes that are yours as well? If yes, then go! If the candidate has a scheduled appearance in your university or barangay, take time out to ask them questions.

It's no different from checking out that bottle of shampoo you're buying from the supermarket. Read the label, sniff the contents, check out the ingredients. The best step, of course, is to have the chance to test the product before buying. When it comes to elections, if a candidate has been bought before and he or she proved to be a lousy choice, then don't buy him or her again.

4. "We've had elections before. I haven't seen any changes. I'm not even sure if our elections are clean! We still have the 2004 questions hanging over our heads and here we are again. How do they expect us to participate?"

It is easier to throw in the towel and walk away. We all know that. It is also very justifiable to dismiss a political exercise when we think it's a useless, pointless exercise.

Many of us find ourselves right smack in that frame of mind today. But, you see, every day the country begs you for demonstrations of hope. The polls definitely fall under that category. It's justifiable to be jaded sometimes, but the bigger doom of our country lies not in self-serving politicians or the so-called evil establishment we are up against, but the cynicism of young people.

Let's choose the possibility of frustration over indifference for now. Let's frustrate the cynics. Voting is not the only thing we can do during these elections.

Rock Ed volunteers have helped man the phone lines of Gabay Halalan, an election information hotline set up by the Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan at the Ateneo de Manila University. (Dial 101-49 from any PLDT phone for free election-related information.) We can report electoral violations to the Comelec. We can join and support advocacies that organize poll watching. We can engage in intelligent conversation with friends and compare our lists. Listen to other people's opinions on candidates you aren't familiar with and share what you know, too. Visit www.comelec.gov.ph. Let's try to "rage against the dying light."

5. "I didn't bother to register because I think it's useless. That's okay, I'm just one vote anyway."

Of course your voice counts. This is your time. This is our time. Whatever it is you have to say about things that matter (like these elections), you must be heard somehow. I know this is why you blog, chat, text or Multiply, why you have accounts at Friendster or MySpace. You believe you have something to show and say to the world through photos of your life and your daily posts.

It's like voting. It's a clear and direct statement about your hopes for the country, so do it well. For as long as we are armed with the willingness to vote wisely and to guard our ballots, we're making it harder for the shady ones to prevail.

The author is the founder and executive director of Rock Ed Philippines and lectures on media education at the Jesuit Communication Multi-Media Training Center at the Ateneo de Manila University. She co-hosts "Rock Ed Radio" with Lourd de Veyra on NU107, the show airs every Sunday at 8 p.m.

E-mail her at gang@rockedphilippines. org

Let's rally

From page D1

shirt. No tickets will be sold, but those interested to attend must present a valid ID and either one of these two things: wear a Rock Ed T-shirt (bought from the T-Shirt Project store or any Branded/Spoofs outlet) or a printout of the entrance-pass form downloadable from www.rockedphilippines.org or www.rockedradio.com.

The concert is organized by Rock Ed Philippines (Manila) together with the Commission on Higher Education, Red Horse Extra Strong Beer, Globe and Francgene Benet Events Group.

Other collaborators are the National Youth Commission, Samahang Lingkod Bayan, Team Manila Graphic Design Group, Analog Soul, Binalot, NU107, UniversiTV and Burn magazine.

A show of numbers will manifest the desire of young Filipinos for clean and honest elections. To transform the nation politically and economically, we have to start inside us. This transformation cannot be done by a concert, I know. We know that education, the establishment of a rational, duly-elected government and simple diligence can usher this desired change—but we have to start somewhere.

So let's take this concert as a figurative clearing of our throats (ahem, ahem) before we speak loud and clear. Let your voice be heard.

Gang Badoy

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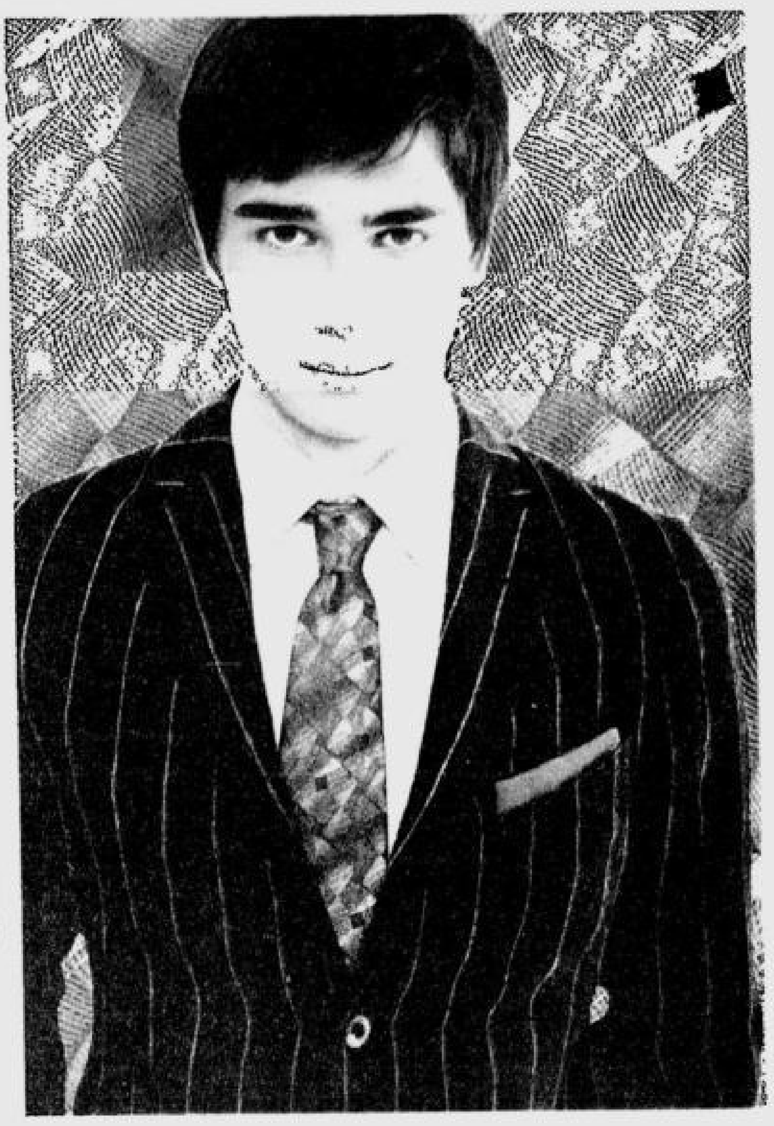
JAMES Younghusband, the older of the two, will be competing in the SEA Games with his brother this December.

PHIL Younghusband is on his way to superstardom.



THE YOUNGHUSBAND brothers are hot on and off the field.

2BU! FAN FILES

Getting a kick out of these boys

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

BRITISH-FILIPINO BROTHERS PHIL and James Younghusband are set to become the next big names in our pop-culture landscape.

Apart from a flourishing career with the English Premier League Champions, Chelsea FC, which just renewed him, Phil is known to be the most valuable striker of the Philippine Football Federation Men's Under-23 national team.

Older brother James—who will be competing in the SEA Games this December with his brother—was also recently handpicked by premiere necktie brand Armando Caruso as celebrity endorser and was flown to the country for a series of pictorials.

On MySpace, I discovered that these footballers have a great following from England to the Philippines.

One magical day, I actually met Phil. A journalist friend of mine dragged me to an interview she was doing, and I didn't know that her subject was Phil. Imagine how pleasantly shocked I was to see someone whose MySpace profile I had visited everyday. I was so star struck that I couldn't even eat.

And then something else happened. Phil's publicist needed to create his portfolio. I volunteered to help since she was having a hard time looking for a crew at such short notice. By the end of the day, I was able to not only help Phil choose clothes for his shoot, I was also able to style his hair inside the men's room—something I know a lot of Pinoy girls and gay guys would die for!

Until now I can't believe how lucky I was that day.

Phil is a star, and it won't take long before he becomes a superstar. He is cool, confident and charming. And he's great at what he does, of course. He's such a great football player that he has caught the eyes of LA Galaxy, which David Beckham plays for. Imagine a half-Filipino playing alongside Beckham!

Just last week, I got even luckier when Phil's publicist invited me to meet the elder brother, who turned out to be James.

Once again, I was in shock. It was definitely déjà vu for me, going into a room and discovering a pleasant surprise. But this time was different. I had learned my lesson already, so I made the most out of every little moment I spent with James, who is just so mysterious, calm, collected, mature and sophisticated at 20.

I didn't have any particular cinematic moment with James, but we were able to talk about a lot of things: his brother, his future plans, his expectations and, of course, football. The sport remains on the top of this looker's list, but in case he gets tired of the sport, I'm sure he can earn a living by being a model in this country.

He's got the height and frame for ramp shows, the good looks for print ads and the magnetic appeal for TVCs. No wonder Armando Caruso flew him here, with several magazines shooting him every day of his week-long trip.

I may not be the biggest Younghusband fan out there, but somebody up there loves me enough to gift me with some precious time with two dashing, talented and extremely interesting blokes that I have come to be super-fond of in such a short span of time.

Until now, I wonder why I got chosen from among all the Younghusband fanatics out there. All I know is that I am now a football fanatic, thanks to the Younghusband brothers, and promoting the sport in this basketball-crazy country has suddenly become my mission.

Share your own fan files by e-mailing Ls_2bu@inquirer.com.ph.

E-mail the author at marksablan_2bu@yahoo.com

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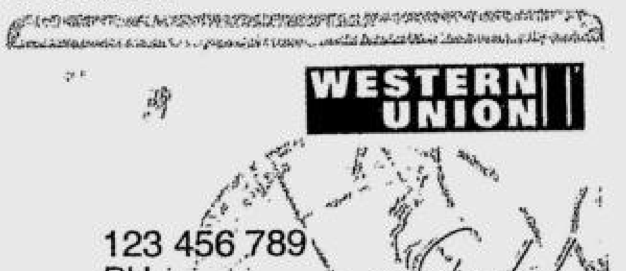

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Pooches in paradise

By Paolo Lorenzana
Contributor

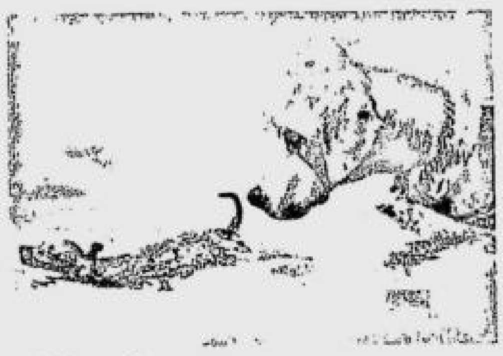
IT'S ALMOST AS IF ALL DOGS had gone to heaven—heaven being an expansive white beach with enough room to leave paw prints in the sand.

While the bipolar island of Boracay is devoted to the extremes of absolute relaxation and hard partying for us humans, it's only natural that our beloved dogs would get some action as well, courtesy of the recent Purina Alpo's Dog Fair and Frisbee Challenge.

At Summer Place in Station 2, the party began under the morning sun with a lot of butt sniffing, leg humping and tail-wagging while owners stepped to the sidelines and reveled in displays of canine cuteness: a Chihuahua getting frisky with a Bulldog; a chocolate Lab and Great Dane paw-paddling side by side in the cool blue water; and a dozen or so dogs in neckerchiefs getting primped at booths for the fashion show and for the Frisbee challenge that would kick off at Hey Jude! in the afternoon.

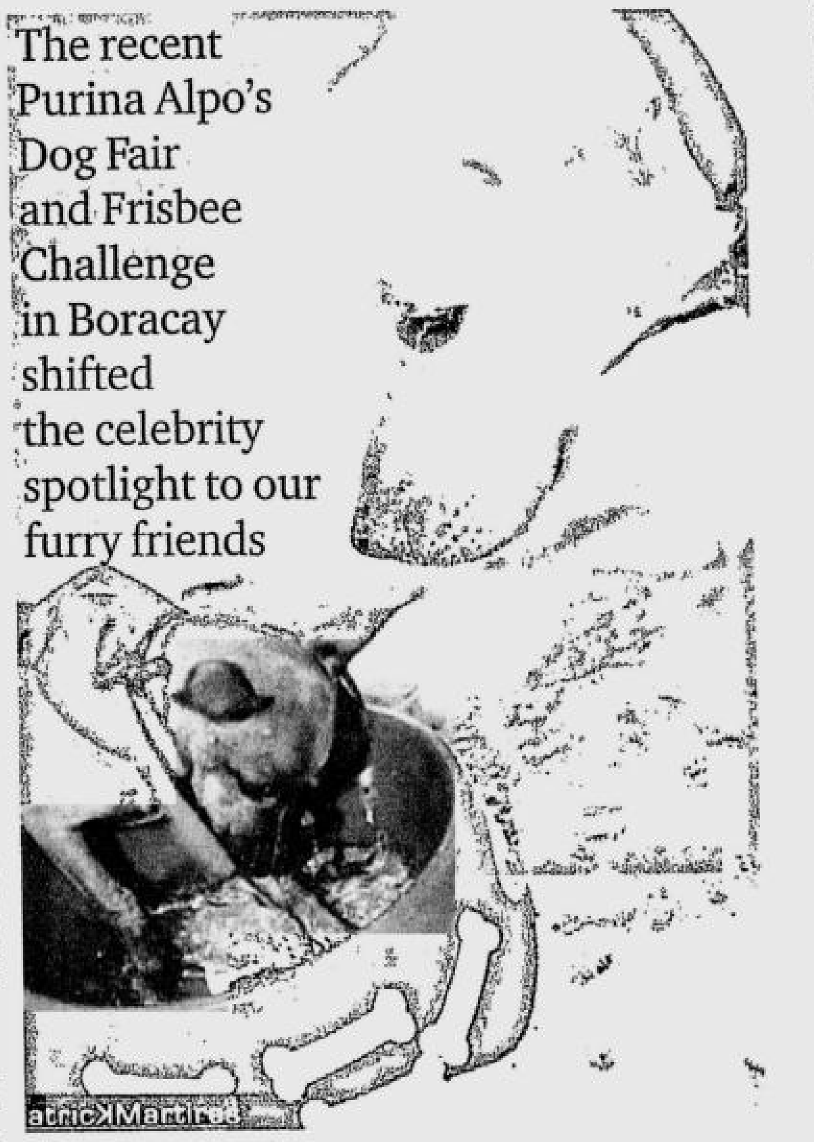
You'd think the dogs were celebrities considering the hefty turnout that gathered by the shore to witness the poochies leaping up and seizing enough Frisbees to win their masters the P15,000 grand prize. It was also a way to prove who'd munched on enough Alpo-2-in-1 for energy.

Even if the Golden Retrievers dominated the event, dogs like Beaver, an American Cocker Spaniel flown in all the way from Manila by its master Jake Ramirez, was a certified hit with the crowd, proving that more than the cash prize, Alpo was all about giving dogs a day out in the sun, and unleashing that much-needed human adoration as well.


SINK or swim

FEELING the heat in Boracay

SERIOUS frisbee action


The recent Purina Alpo's Dog Fair and Frisbee Challenge in Boracay shifted the celebrity spotlight to our furry friends

IT'S a dog-eat-dog world.

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BLAKE Lewis

Bowled over by Blake, Lakisha, and Bon Jovi on 'American Idol'

ROCK NIGHT IS ONE OF THE most awaited themes in Star World's "American Idol." Last week's show featured one of mainstream American rock and roll's most enduring acts, Bon Jovi, showing our Idols how to edge it up for the stage.

After Wednesday night, every one couldn't get enough of Blake Lewis' funky version of "You Give Love a Bad Name," while Lakisha Jones bared her soulfulness with a dramatic performance of "This Ain't a Love Song." Judges Randy, Simon, and Paula gave them the thumbs up, and so did 2bU! readers.

For their entries to the Star World-2bU! U B the Judge promo, Angela, Mark Bryan, and Pio all win special premium prizes from Star World and "American Idol." Congratulations, guys! To claim your prize, please call Cindy Corrales at 893-7472 to 73.

You too can win exciting prizes from the world's biggest singing competition! Catch "American Idol" tonight at 6 p.m. live via satellite (or 8 p.m. primetime and 11:30 p.m.) on Star World, give us your name and contact details, comment on the finalists' performance, styling, song choice, audience impact, and even fashion in five sentences or less and e-mail to starworld.ph@gmail.com. The finals are almost here, people, let's hear it! We know there's an inner Simon in you.

Here's what our winning trio thought of last week's Bon Jovi bonanza:

Angela Santiago: Blake did so well with his rendition of "You Give Love A Bad Name." He was able to make it his own without destroying the song. I was disappointed that Jordin did not give her usual breathtaking performance, but I still believe she deserves to be in the finale.

Mark Bryan Garcia: Most of last Wednesday's performances of famous Bon Jovi songs were amazing! Phil was pretty good and the audiences enjoyed his performance very much, but then Simon (as always) had to be a killjoy. Lakisha's performance was so fantastic that it even prompted Simon to kiss her. The best performance of the night, of course, was Blake. The beatboxer was the most fashionable and he really made the song sound more exciting. I loved it! Blake deserves to be the next American Idol.

Pio II Tabernilla: It was a rocking Bon Jovi night and, yup, Lakisha is definitely back, redeeming herself with her golden pipes and powerful rendition of "This Ain't A Love Song." Blake's new hair color and big risk to stylize "You Give Love A Bad Name" was very hip and entertaining.

LAKISHA Jones

[illegible]

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Chris, Phil: We knew it

CHRIS RICHARDSON

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

By Kathryn Fatima Reyes

LAST WEEK, CHRIS RICHARDSON AND Phil Stacey were sent home from "American Idol," the reality TV show that continues to rule the ratings in America.

"Phil and I [sort of] knew we were going home," Chris, the 28-year-old singer from Chesapeake, Virginia told media men from around the world in a recent conference

CHRIS/ E3

PHIL STACEY

Bank quick and secure – anywhere your adventures may take you

Businessman Olli Wirman loves to explore the Philippines' aquatic wonders - the more remote the better. Yet no matter how deep underwater he might be, he still has to be on top of business.

How does he do it then? By doing most of his banking on the road. He's turned it into a pre-trip step as easy and automatic as checking his diving gear.

With BPI Express Mobile, Olli makes it a standard procedure to check his deposits and loan balances and even pay his bills, long before he hits the water -- all via his Globe Handyphone, anywhere in the country.

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All these, in a way that's ideal for people who love the open road:
- **Fast** – Transfer funds or pay bills in 20 seconds.
- **Safe** – No worries. BPI uses industry standard technology to secure its mobile banking applications.
- **Easy** – If you can text, you can bank. No sophisticated phones required -- all you need is an eligible Globe SIM, whether plan or prepaid.

All the convenience is yours for just the cost of your text messages.

Thanks to BPI Express Mobile, Olli's mind is more than worry free – it's clear, serene and vibrantly alive as the ocean he loves to explore.

So if you can hear the water calling you, here are some places to push your limits:

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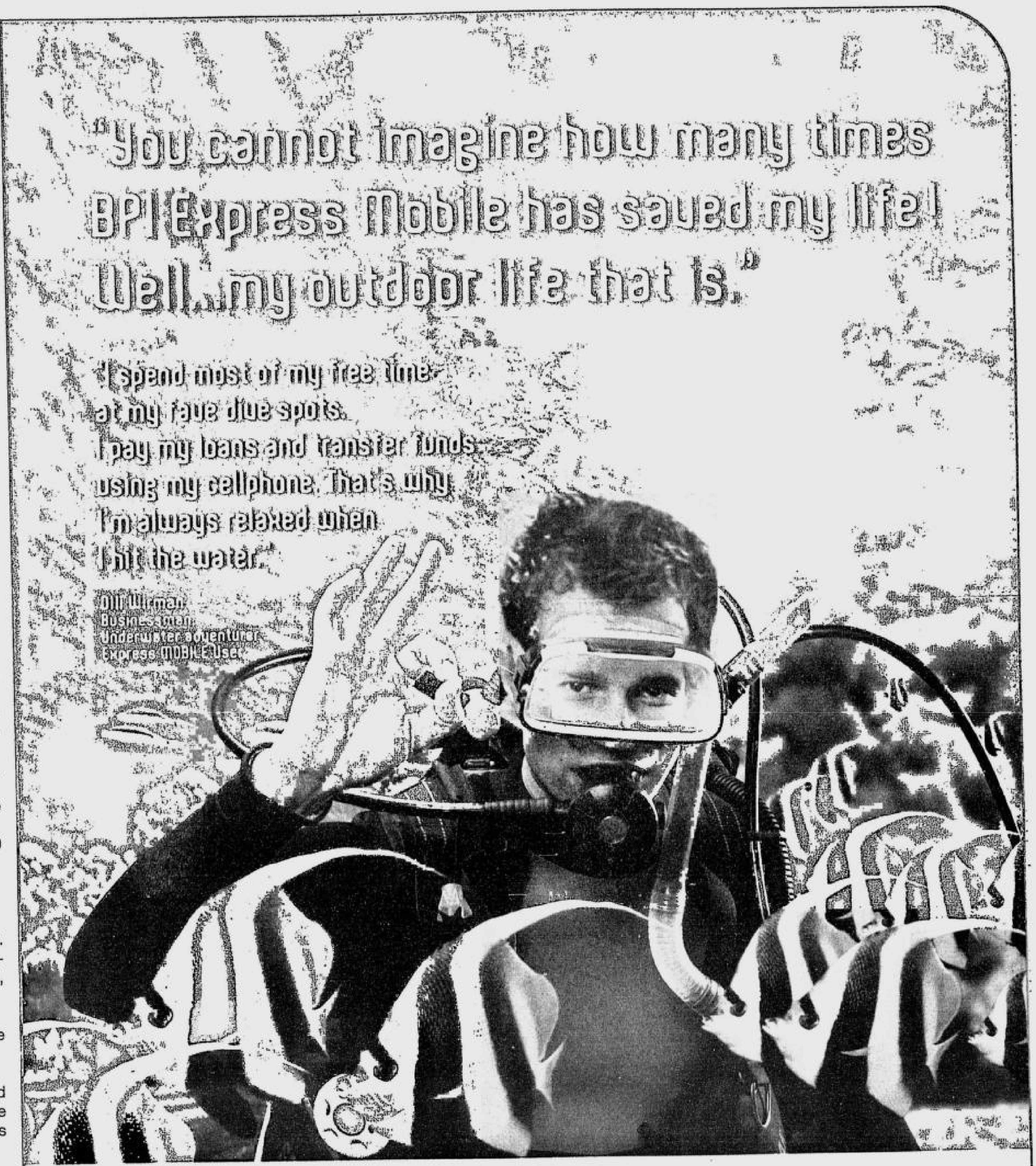
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'Rounin' quickly runs out of steam

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE FIRST COUPLE OF TELEcasts of ABS-CBN's "Rounin" were impressive for their big action scenes, visuals, effects and production values. One spectacular sequence followed another, and we had ourselves a good time seeing the new sci-fi series' story so dynamically unfold.

Not that its tale of warring nations and knight-like cadres of heroic youths was all that new. A combination of anime fantasy and "Star Wars," the story offers many standard flourishes, but few surprises.

Despite this, we told ourselves that we could put up with the standard story line, because the show's plus factors were good enough to keep us interested.

Unfortunately, after making a good first impression, "Rounin" has opted to go slow and low, focusing not so much on action and fight scenes, with their attendant visual effects, but on the development of its story about the next generation of Rounin, made up of characters played by **Luis Manzano, Angelica Panganiban** and **Rafael Rosell.**

A SCENE from "Rounin"

The series may be sci-fi, but its current story is predictably mundane and earthbound, with its young leads figuring in standard conflicts like a love triangle and bitter competition for succession to the fighting corps' top post.

Even the fight scenes are occasionally leaden in execution. The young warriors are supposed to be imbued with special powers, but they spend so much time in traditional martial arts combat and swordplay, before they finally resort to those superpowers.

We hope that the series can turn dynamic again, with more of the compelling visualizations that made its first few episodes so interesting and involving.

On point of performance, the youthful cast is limited by the predictable plot and character development. As a result, most of the time they simply go through the thespic motions, so no one really stands out.

We trust that, as the series picks up steam, so will its lead actors' portrayals, so viewers can become genuinely involved in them.

We need this to happen, because local TV screens should flare with genuine excitement and empathy, which are difficult to find in the rehashed TV-film plots that pass for new *teleseryes* these days. We hope that "Rounin" will turn out to be the exciting exception to the desultory rule.

Feedback

From **Manuel B. Onabia** of Quezon City: "I think you should spend more time listening to the radio, because the performance there is even worse than what we see on TV.

"Many times, I hear radio announcers cracking green jokes. They also make comments on the news obviously without much thinking. And some of them shamelessly promote themselves and their sidelines. These people should be reminded that they are on the air to serve the public, not to feather their own nests.

"Does the Kapisanan ng mga Broadcaster ng Pilipinas adequately regulate these stations? From the excesses we hear, obviously not."

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
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1	LUCKY YOU	2:55, 5:40, 8:25, 11:00	PG-13
2	SPIDER-MAN 3	1:00, 4:10, 7:20, 10:30	G
3	SPIDER-MAN 3	1:30, 4:40, 7:50, 11:00	G
4	28 WEEKS LATER	1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00	R-13

To receive Eastwood City Events, Promos and Cinema schedule just text eastwood and send to 2948 for Globe, Smart & Sun Cellular subscribers

For inquiries, call:
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28 WEEKS LATER R13	SPIDER-MAN 3 G	SPIDER-MAN 3 G
LUCKY YOU PG13	THE CONDEMNED	SPIDER-MAN 3 G

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CINEMA 2	28 WEEKS LATER	R-13

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CINEMA 4	SPIDERMAN 3	GP
CINEMA 5	SPIDERMAN 3	GP

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MUSIC MUSEUM

May 11 & 12, 2007	Rock the Vote " The Repeat "	8:00 PM
May 18, 2007	CHRISTIAN BAUTISTA	8:00 PM
May 19 & 26, 2007	OGIE ALCASID & SITTI	8:00 PM
June 15 & 16, 2007	Rico J. Puno & Mitch Valdez	8:00 PM

TEATRINO
PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00 PM
May 31, 2007	RJ Jimenez	8:30 PM
May 11, 18, 25, 2007	Drag - Ons	9:00 PM
JUNE 15, 2007	Champion of the World (Jed Madela)	8:30 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4532 LOC 116

SHANG CINEPLEX

1	SPIDER-MAN 3	MTRCB: GP	1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30
2	SPIDER-MAN 3	MTRCB GP	11:30, 2:30, 5:30, 8:30
3	28 WEEKS LATER	MTRCB R-13	12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 10:00
4	LUCKY YOU	MTRCB PG-13	1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
PREMIERE THEATRE	SPIDER-MAN 3	(GP)	12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

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glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls

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Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 28 WEEKS LATER	2 SPIDER-MAN 3	3 THE CONDEMNED	4 SPIDER-MAN 3
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 SPIDER-MAN 3	2 LUCKY YOU	3 THX SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 PERFECT STRANGERS	5 THE CONDEMNED	6 SPIDER-MAN 3	7 28 WEEKS LATER
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 LUCKY YOU	2 SPIDER-MAN 3		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 28 WEEKS LATER GUARANTEED SEATS	4 LUCKY YOU GUARANTEED SEATS	5 SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 SPIDER-MAN 3		
	3 LUCKY YOU	4 THE CONDEMNED	5 28 WEEKS LATER	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 SPIDER-MAN 3	2 SPIDER-MAN 3	3	4 GRAY MATTERS
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 SPIDER-MAN 3	2 LUCKY YOU		
	3 28 WEEKS LATER	4 THE CONDEMNED	5 SPIDER-MAN 3	

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Laguna Expo May 7 to 13, 2007	One Shot Encounter w/ NIGEL BARKER May 11, 2007 - 6PM
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Nesvita Sampling Booth at Paseos May 11 & 12, 2007	Strawberry Shortcake & Friends: The Big Berry Bake Off May 11 to 13, 2007

GREENBELT — One Shot Encounter w/ NIGEL BARKER
May 10, 2007, 7PM - Greenbelt 3 Park

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Alabang Town Center Winner
Alex Fuentespina
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2-Night Singapore Cruise for 2 with Roundtrip Airline Accommodation

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Per DTI Permit No. 1254 Series of 2007

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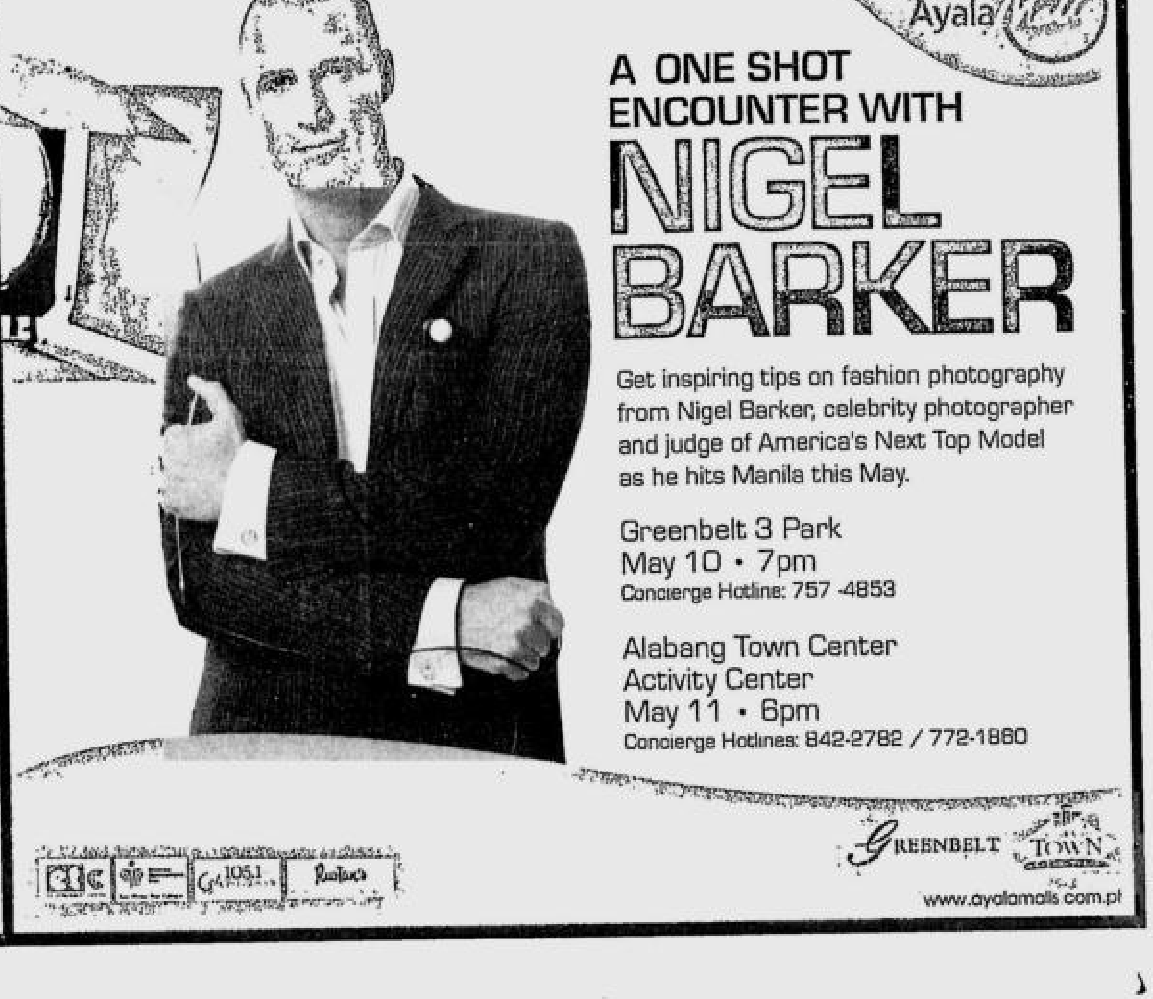

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Activity Center
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GREENBELT TOWN
www.ayalamalls.com.ph

Chris, Phil: We knew it

From page E1

call. "When Ryan [Seacrest] called me and Blake [Lewis], I knew I was leaving."

Chris added that, while he was on stage with Blake, he noticed that the band had begun to set up and the guitar player had grabbed the 12-string guitar. His was the only song the previous (performance) night with a 12-string guitar.

Phil, who is with the US Navy, said he was agreeable to getting the boot precisely at this point, after two good weeks.

"I wanted to win," Phil said. "[But] I'm glad to leave on a high note."

Left to slug it out for the coveted title now are Melinda Doolittle, LaKisha Jones, Jordin Sparks and Blake Lewis.

Was there a specific performance where the judges' comments surprised you?

PHIL: My big surprise came on country week. I'm certainly more in my comfort zone in country music. But I'd grown so accustomed to getting critical feedback that when Randy was like, "Dude, you were good this week." I was like, "Really?"

CHRIS: I remember back in the earlier rounds, I didn't think "The Geek in the Pink" would roll over too well with the judges. I went out there skeptical. I was like, "I wonder if they'd like something different?" And I did it and they seemed to really love it.

We know that Phil is married. Chris, you're charming, and you're a good-looking guy. Are you single, are you seeing anyone?

CHRIS: I just got out of a three-and-a-half year relationship back home. That's about it. All of the other rumors ... all of that stuff were just rumors. I'm pretty much single, but still respecting the fact that I'm [fresh] out of a relationship.

Who do you think is the front-runner now?

PHIL: The four people left have individual strengths. I think Blake is the most original contestant ever on "American Idol." He just [swung] it this week with Bon Jovi. It was incredible. Melinda is possibly the greatest singer I've ever heard on the show. LaKisha sings with so much passion, it's hard to listen to her and not get chills. And Jordin has got a range that lasts for days—her upper notes have so much power. I think it's anybody's ball game at this point.

CHRIS: I feel the exact same way.

PHIL: Leaving on a high note

CHRIS: More songs to sing

Phil, is it possible that you may miss the tour because you have to go back to your job at the Navy?

PHIL: My primary responsibility is to the United States Navy. They've been 100 percent flexible with me with "American Idol." The last time that I spoke with my commanding officer, things looked very promising [as far as] going on the tour. It would break my heart to not be able to go.

What was your best decision as a top 12 contestant?

PHIL: To go into it with a positive outlook and be happy, and understand how blessed I was to be there to begin with. I think a lot of people started liking me more as a person when they saw that.

Chris, who among the judges did you find most supportive?

CHRIS: I would have to say Randy. He always seemed to dig my music, even on bad nights; he always saw something positive. Paula would just always have something uplifting to say.

What would you like to sing on the tour?

CHRIS: I haven't thought that far ahead. I've a lot of songs I wanna sing and I've got to figure out which would best suit the style of music that I'd be coming out with on my album.

Phil, why the bald look? Why did that work for you ultimately?

PHIL: I think it worked for me because it ... wasn't something that anybody else had this season.

Chris, how did you feel about the producers pitching you directly against Blake when you're such good friends?

CHRIS: They've got to make a good television show. They're smart producers and they know what will get people interested.

What were you and Blake saying to each other while you waited?

CHRIS: We were singing a song that we wrote and that we used to laugh and joke about. I was also telling him to go ahead and sit down because I knew he was staying.

How did you and Blake become so close?

CHRIS: It started in Hollywood week. It was just one of those things—you just sort of click with somebody. Me and Blake had a lot in common ... music tastes and styles, personality traits ... we just bonded.

Do you have any advice for future "Idol" contestants?

CHRIS: Just be yourself. Don't settle for what they say you should do. If you try to change because three people tell you to, then you're fooling yourself.

PHIL: Go out there and sing songs that you can have fun with, and just be yourself. Pick songs that you already know.

"American Idol" airs on Star World every Wednesday and Thursday, 6 p.m. live via satellite, 8 p.m. prime time, and 11:30 p.m. replay.

DID YOU KNOW...

British rocker held for drugs

LONDON—British rock star Pete Doherty, partner of supermodel Kate Moss, was arrested on Saturday night on suspicion of possessing "Class A" banned drugs, The Sun tabloid reported.

A police spokesperson, who declined to confirm whether Doherty, 28, was indeed arrested, said: "At 2200 hours (2100 GMT) on the 5th (of May), police stopped a vehicle on Kensington High Street.

"A 28-year-old male driver was arrested on suspicion of possession of a class A drug. He was taken to a west London police station, and later bailed to return in June pending further inquiries."

The Sun said the troubled Babyshambles frontman was held in the police station overnight.

AFP

ROUNDUP

'Sining Gising'

THE NATIONAL Broadcasting Network weekly program "Sining Gising: Ugnayan ng DepEd at NCCA sa Tinig ng Bayan" is this year's recipient of the Outstanding Television Program on Culture and the Arts from the Guillermo Mendoza Memorial Scholarship Foundation Inc.

The program, co-produced by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Department of Education, was cited for its promotion of nationalism through a creative and constructive medium.

It airs live on NBN 4 every Sunday, 4 to 6 p.m., with a replay at 12 midnight.

Fly to LA

ETC gives viewers a chance to fly to Los Angeles to visit the set of "E! News" and "Daily 10," programs that feature celebrity gossip and controversies.

Viewers may simply watch the shows from Tuesday to Saturday, 9 p.m. to 10 p.m., wait for the question during gaps and text their answers to 2729 (for Smart and Sun subscribers).

Prizes include gift certificates from The Bellevue Manila, CDs from MCA Music Inc. and premium items from the show.

The promo runs until May 11.

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gatewaymall.com.ph

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3:35 / 4:05 / 4:30 / 5:05 / 5:30 / 6:30 / 7:00
7:25 / 8:00 / 8:25 / 9:25 / 9:55 / 10:20

CONDEMNED
1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30

LUCKY YOU
12:50 / 3:40 / 6:30 / 9:20

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1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40

SPIDERMAN 3
12:15 / 3:10 / 6:05 / 9:00

Mall 5

1 SPIDERMAN 3
12:00 / 2:40 / 5:20 / 8:00

2 SPIDERMAN 3
1:00 / 3:40 / 6:20 / 9:00

3 CONDEMNED
12:45 / 3:25 / 6:05 / 8:45

4 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30

5 28 WEEKS LATER
12:05 / 2:15 / 4:25 / 6:35 / 8:45

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For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

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www.aranetacoliseum.com

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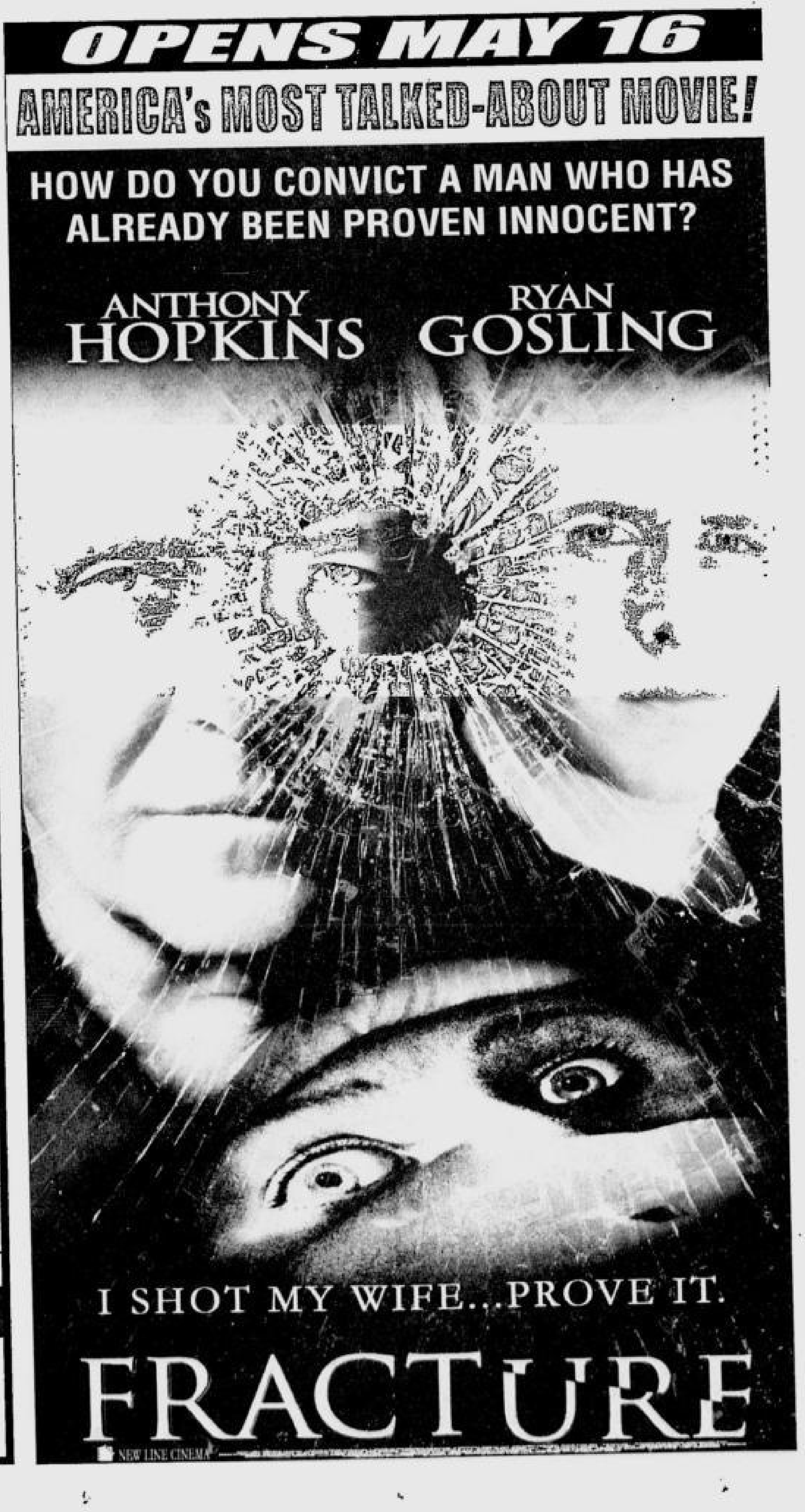
MAY 9, Wednesday
4:35 - Air 21 vs. Coca-Cola 7:20 - Sta Lucia vs. Red Bull

PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE
MAY 13, 2007 Sunday
4:05 - Coca-Cola vs. Alaska 6:20 - Purefoods vs. Ginebra



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3 (DOLBY) 28 WEEKS LATER
4 (DOLBY) LUCKY YOU
PREMIERE
SPIDER-MAN 3

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2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 PAN'S LABYRINTH

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3

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2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 THE CHANTING

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Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
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1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 CONDEMNED

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3

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2 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3
3 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3
4 (DOLBY) 28 WEEKS LATER

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266160
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) CONDEMNED
5 RESERVED

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 5433994
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2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 THE SHOOTER

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1 SUNSHINE
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
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Pacific Mall Cabanatuan, telephone No. (044) 600 ...
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SUNSHINE

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1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
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4 RESERVED

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Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 RESRVED
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1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 TURISTAS
3 SPIDER-MAN-3

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3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 SPIDER-MAN-3

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1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 28 WEEKS LATER
5 THE CONDEMNED
6 LUCKY YOU
7 SPIDER-MAN-3
8 THE REAPING
9 WILD HOGS
10 PERFECT STRANGER

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 THE REAPING
3 SPIDER-MAN-3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 THE HILLS HAVE EYES
2 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) THE CONDEMNED
2 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3
3 (DOLBY) 28 WEEKS LATER
4 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 MASAHISTA
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2 BASA SA DAGAT
3 SUNSHINE
4 KATAS
5 SATANICA

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Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
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2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 LUCKY YOU
5 THE CONDEMNED

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 THE LAST MIMZY
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SUNSHINE
4 SPIDER-MAN-3

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1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3
4

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
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2 SATANICA

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10 LUCKY YOU
11 CONDEMNED
12 28 WEEKS LATER

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10 SPIDER-MAN 3
11 SPIDER-MAN 3
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5 SPIDER-MAN 3
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10 SPIDER-MAN 3
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9 CONDEMNED
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6 SPIDER-MAN 3
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4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 28 WEEKS LATER
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
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4 FIREHOUSE DOG

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 CONDEMNED

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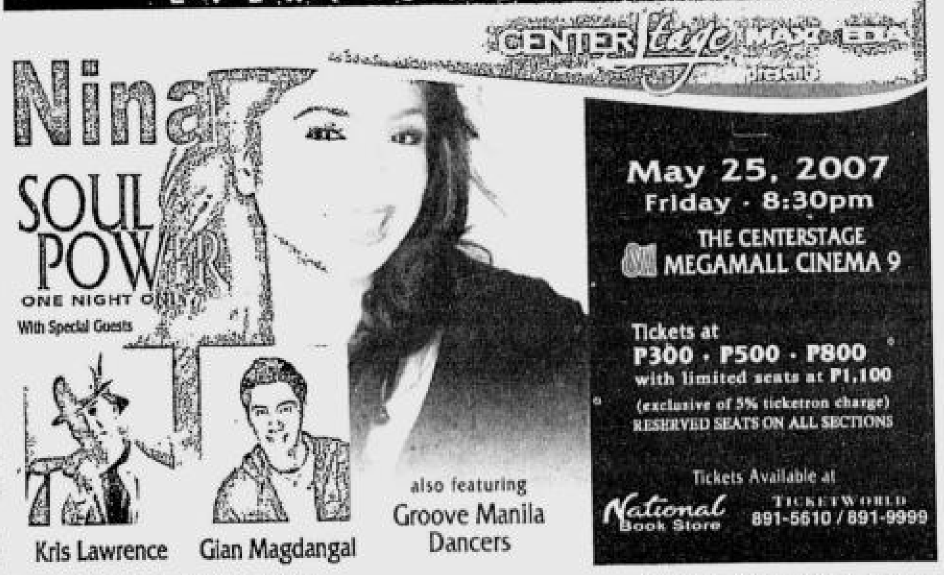

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6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
8 SPIDER-MAN 3

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5 THE SHOOTER
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3 PREMONITION
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2 SPIDER-MAN 3
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4 PREMONITION

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5 THE LAST MIMZY
6 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

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3 SPIDER-MAN 3
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3 PREMONITION
4 THE REAPING

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2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 MISS POTTER
4 THE REAPING

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3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 THE SHOOTER
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 THE REAPING
7 RESERVED
8 GRAY MATTERS

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
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3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 GRAY MATTERS
5 TURISTAS
6 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
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2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 PREMONITION
4 THE REAPING

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'Kaleldo' wows critics in Korea

By Marinel R. Cruz

BRILLANTE MENDOZA'S "KALELDO (Summer Heat)" won the critics' prize from the Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema (Netpac) at the recently concluded Jeonju International Film Festival (JIFF) in Korea.

The award is given to the best Asian film screened in JIFF by the Netpac Organization committee, according to www.eng.jiff.or.kr, the festival website.

"Kaleldo"—Kapampangan for summer—was shot entirely in Guagua, Pampanga a decade after the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo. It tells of the lives of woodcarver Mang Rudy (Johnny Delgado) and his three daughters (Angel Aquino, Juliana Palermo and Cherry Pie Picache).

The JIFF, which focuses on digital, independent and art films, has been held annually in South Korea since 2000.

The news of Mendoza's victory was announced by Filipino critic Noel Vera, one of three jury members in the festival's Indie Vision section, on his website www.criticafterdark.blogspot.com.

"I heard the news from my colleagues while I was shooting my new film 'Tirador.' I've not received formal word from the festival organizers," Mendoza told INQUIRER Entertainment on Monday. "I don't make films to win awards. I just work on what interests me. I'm glad the jury appreciated what I did on 'Kaleldo.'"

Mendoza added that the jury must have liked "how the film mirrored Filipino culture."

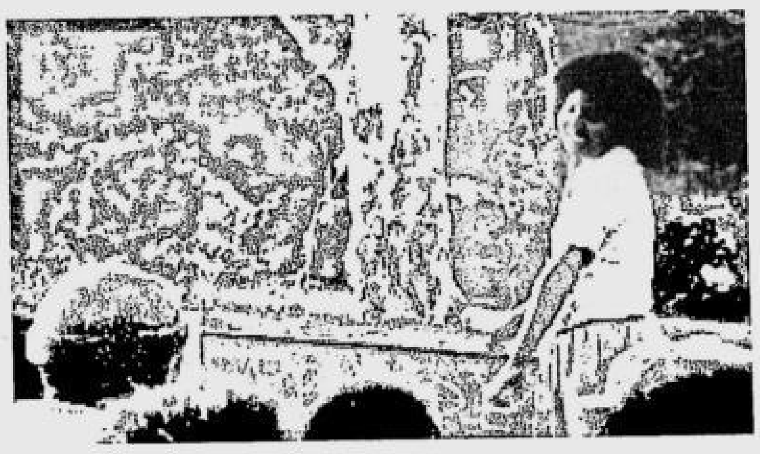
BRILLANTE MENDOZA

Forming the three-member Netpac jury were: Gulnara Abikeyeva, art director of Eurasian International Film Festival and director of Kazakhstan Central Asia Film Center since 2004; Yu Ji-na, film critic, professor of the Department of Film and Digital Media at Dongguk University and chief director of Coalition for Cultural Diversity in Moving Image (CDMI); and Ashley Ratnavibhushana, board member and Netpac jury coordinator and founder of the Asian Film Centre/Sri Lanka.

"Kaleldo" has taken part in film festivals in Rome, Vienna, Hawaii and Cairo. Mendoza's previous film "Masahista" has also won honors in foreign festivals.

Later this month, his "Foster Child," produced by Seiko Films, is the only Filipino full-length feature that will be shown in the Director's Fortnight section of the Cannes International Film Festival.

OPENING THIS WEEK



Manoro: The Aeta Teacher

Stars Jonalyn Ablong, Edgar Ablong
Directed by Brillante Mendoza

The *manoro* or teacher in the title is Jonalyn Ablong, an Aeta girl who teaches her tribe's elders how to read and write in preparation for a presidential election. This digital movie bagged the CinemAvvenire Prize at the 24th Torino International Film Festival in Turin, Italy. It also won Best Director and Picture at the Digital Lokal tilt of the Cinemanila film fest last year. It was the country's entry in the Festival of Three Continents in Nantes, France. Writing for Senses of Cinema, Olaf Möller, Cologne-based film critic, commends "Mendoza's unpretentious sense of precision, timing." Rito P. Asilo of the INQUIRER calls it "compelling … a welcome addition to Mendoza's oeuvre." Exclusively at IndieSine Robinsons Galleria.

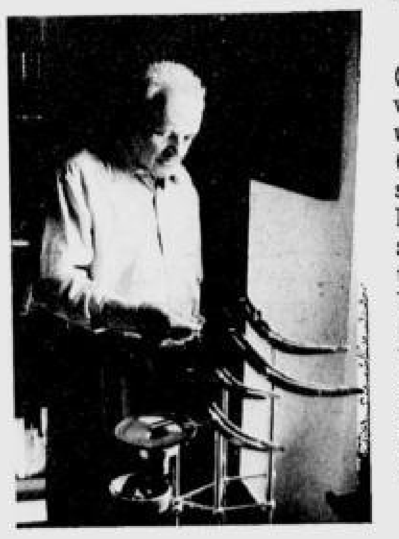
Lucky You

Stars Eric Bana, Drew Barrymore, Robert Duvall, Jean Smart, Debra Messing
Directed by Curtis Hanson

Described as a "marathon, no-stakes drama," this romance set in Las Vegas pairs a poker hotshot (Bana) with a sweet lounge singer (Barrymore). Gene Seymour of Newsday says that it "opens with a killer sequence that, by itself, is one of the best short films you'll ever see … [but] it's an aimless bluffer." Lisa Schwarzbaum of Entertainment Weekly thinks it's "a gut play from (director-writer-producer) Hanson, who's a declared poker aficionado … [but] a decent movie just wasn't in the cards." Richard Schickel of Time magazine comments that it "has the best opening sequence … smart, funny … [but] the rest isn't quite as good as the beginning. It is more intricate than entertaining."

Fracture

Stars Anthony Hopkins, Ryan Gosling, David Strathairn, Rosamund Pike, Billy Burke
Directed by Gregory Hoblit



A rich aeronautical engineer (Hopkins) is poised to get away with the murder of his wife. It is up to an ambitious young lawyer (Gosling) to prove that the scheming old man is guilty. Lou Lumenick of New York Post describes it as "Hannibal without the Chianti and fava beans … [It] breaks no new ground, but with the two [lead stars], you'll never be bored." Justin Chang of Variety opines that it's "an elegantly framed battle of wits … an absorbing legal thriller that can't help but taste like exquisitely re-

OPENING/ E5

Kirsten doesn't mind being on Spidey's web again

From page E6

WITH "Spider-Man 3" star Tobey Maguire

time, I met Tobey and I read for the movie. I remember wanting so badly to be in this film. I've [ran into] so many opportunities because of 'Spider-Man.'"

Kirsten, who started in show business at age 3 doing television commercials, pointed out that she has matured and grown up with "Spider-Man." She was about 16 when she did the first Spidey movie.

"We all know things change," said Kirsten, who turned 25 on April 30. "That's reflected in the films, and you've definitely seen us all grow up a little bit."

Singing part

Kirsten gets to the sing in "Spider-Man 3," just as she did in the films "The Cat's Meow," "Bring it On" and "Marie Antoinette."

"Luckily, I got to pre-record the song so I just had to lip-synch," she explained. "But that was the first day of work—walking down the steep stairs—it was not easy. I didn't rehearse or have any idea what it was going to be like. So to not look down the steps and sing in high heels and a dress—as a woman, you understand how hard that was!"

A Golden Globe nominee for her performance in "Interview with the Vampire," Kirsten revealed that she put forward her own ideas about her MJ character, and that these were factored in. "But while I was doing the second film, I definitely was not thinking of the third."

She also confessed she enjoyed working with Tobey again. They were once an item off-screen.

"After working on three movies with him, we already know each other very well," she explained. "He is very business-like and I am very emotional. We complement each other. We know what buttons to push ... Our relationship has matured and everything that we feel about each other is in the movie."

They are now the best of friends, Kirsten said.

Proud dad

Tobey is now the proud father of a baby girl with his fiancée, Jennifer Meyer. Kirsten is being linked to Razorlight front man Johnny Borrell. The rocker has spoken publicly about his relationship with Kirsten and described her as "a great girl."

Kirsten credited director Sam Raimi for "making us all feel comfortable on the set by explaining every scene to us. I did not go to acting school so I just discover things by myself and learn a lot from my director."

Making things interesting in the Peter Parker-MJ-Harry Osborn (James) love triangle is the introduction of Gwen Stacy, Peter Parker's former classmate and first love. Bryce Dallas Howard ("The Village"), daughter of director Ron Howard, takes on the role of the beautiful blonde who has a crush on Spider-Man and who gets a controversial kiss from him.

On the other hand, Gwen is the object of desire of photographer Eddie Brock (Topher Grace, who also becomes the villain Venom), who mistakes her casual friendliness for romantic interest.

So will Kirsten sign up for "Spider-Man 4"?

"We'll see. If there's a good story to tell and Sam is the director and Tobey's the star, I will be there."

OPENING THIS WEEK

From page E4

heated leftovers." Manohla Dargis of New York Times agrees: "[It] offers an assortment of treats, notably ... crafty scene stealer Hopkins [and] equally cunning screen nibbler Gosling."

The Condemned

Stars Stone Cold Steve Austin, Vinnie Jones, Robert Mammone

Directed by Scott Wiper

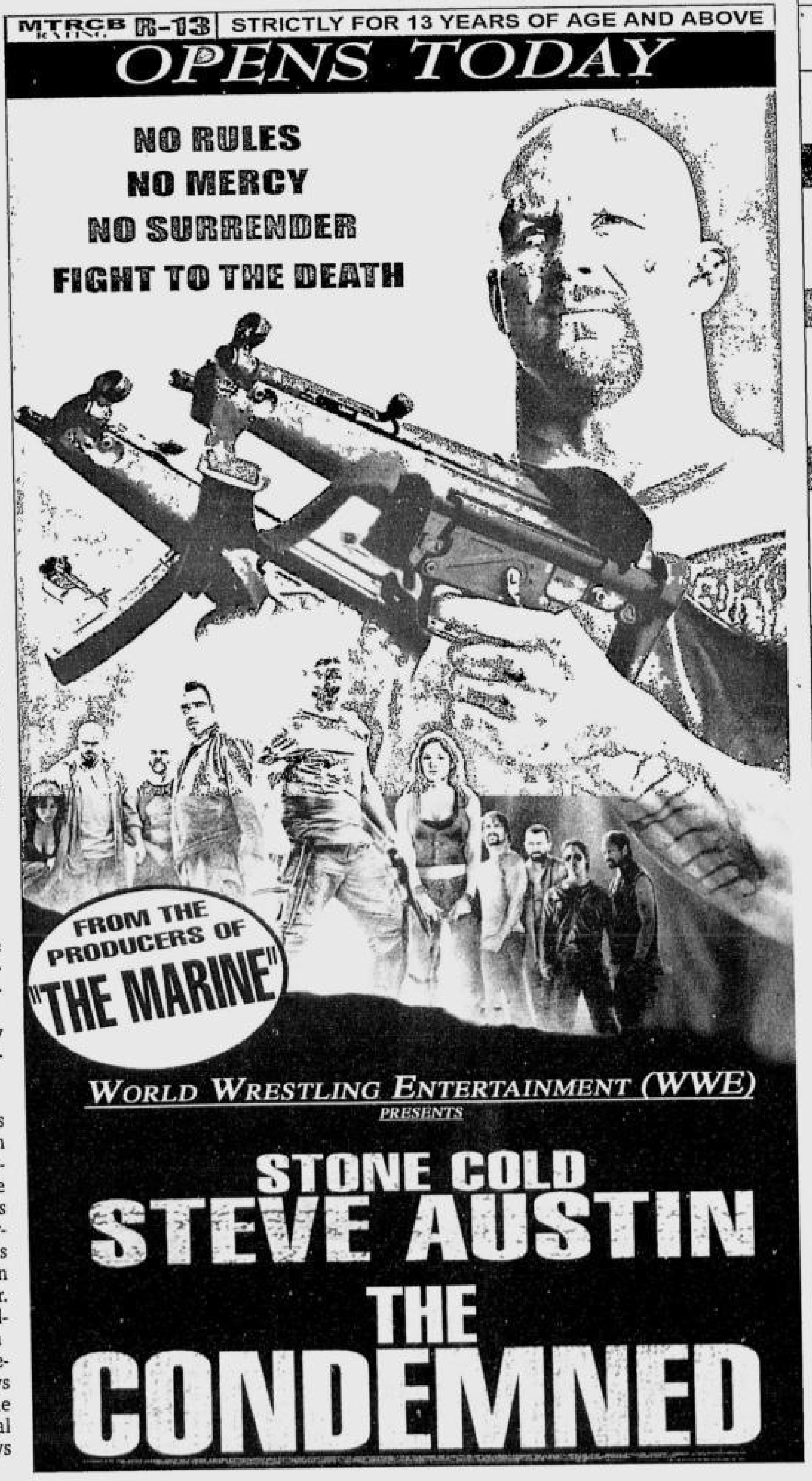
A wealthy madman (Mammone) kidnaps 10 death-row convicts and forces them to play a "Survivor"-type game in which they must kill each other to win. Elizabeth Weitzman of New York Daily News complains that it's a "cheap exploitation flick ... It's not only morally bankrupt, [it] scrapes the bottom of the entertainment barrel." Luke Y. Thompson of LA Weekly concurs: "It's no surprise that lost in all the movie's moralizing about the dangers of violent entertainment is any commentary on the morality of the death penalty itself." Michael Wilmington of Chicago Tribune rants: "(The) first starring role of wrestling superstar Austin is a real stinker. It doesn't have the courage of its own bad taste."

28 Weeks Later

Stars Rose Byrne, Robert Carlyle, Jeremy Renner, Imogen Poots

Directed by Juan Carlos Fresnadillo

Reconstruction begins six months after Great Britain is declared zombie-free. But the rage virus, which turns people into the living dead, manifests itself again via an unlikely carrier. Rich Cline of Shadowsonthewall.com states that this sequel to "28 Days Later" "avoids the original's central flaw ... [and] plays on our deepest fears as it continually shifts gears." Louise Keller of Urbancinefile.com observes that "the sequel [has] more blood and terror than the original ... the visual effects are considerable ... a competently made genre film." Andrew Kasch of Dreadcentral.com asserts that it's "more epic, tense and character-driven than its predecessor ... [it] extends into much fresher territory."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2 SPIDER-MAN 3
12:45 3:35 6:25 9:15
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
1:45 4:35 7:25
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
1:00 3:50
5 THE CONDEMNED
6 28 WEEKS LATER
7 PAN'S LABYRINTH
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6 SPIDER-MAN 3
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1:30 4:10 6:50 9:30
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4 THE CONDEMNED
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
12:00 2:40 5:20 8:00
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
3:40 6:20 9:00
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8 28 WEEKS LATER

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4 28 WEEKS LATER
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6 SPIDER-MAN 3

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3 THE CONDEMNED
4 28 WEEKS LATER

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Kirsten doesn't mind being on Spidey's web again

KIRSTEN Dunst as Mary Jane

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
Contributor

LOS ANGELES—A BEAMING Kirsten Dunst, dimples showing, walked into the room wearing a lovely white sleeveless dress with a low neckline.

She could get married in that dress, we thought.

Kirsten was obviously in the mood to tease her colleagues Tobey Maguire, James Franco and Thomas Haden Church, who were also present during this press conference.

Tobey, Kirsten and James are reunited in "Spider-Man 3," the latest in the blockbuster franchise. Thomas ("Sideways") joins the original cast as Flint Marko, the guy who, it turns out, killed Peter Parker's uncle, and who turns into one of Spidey's opponents, Sandman.

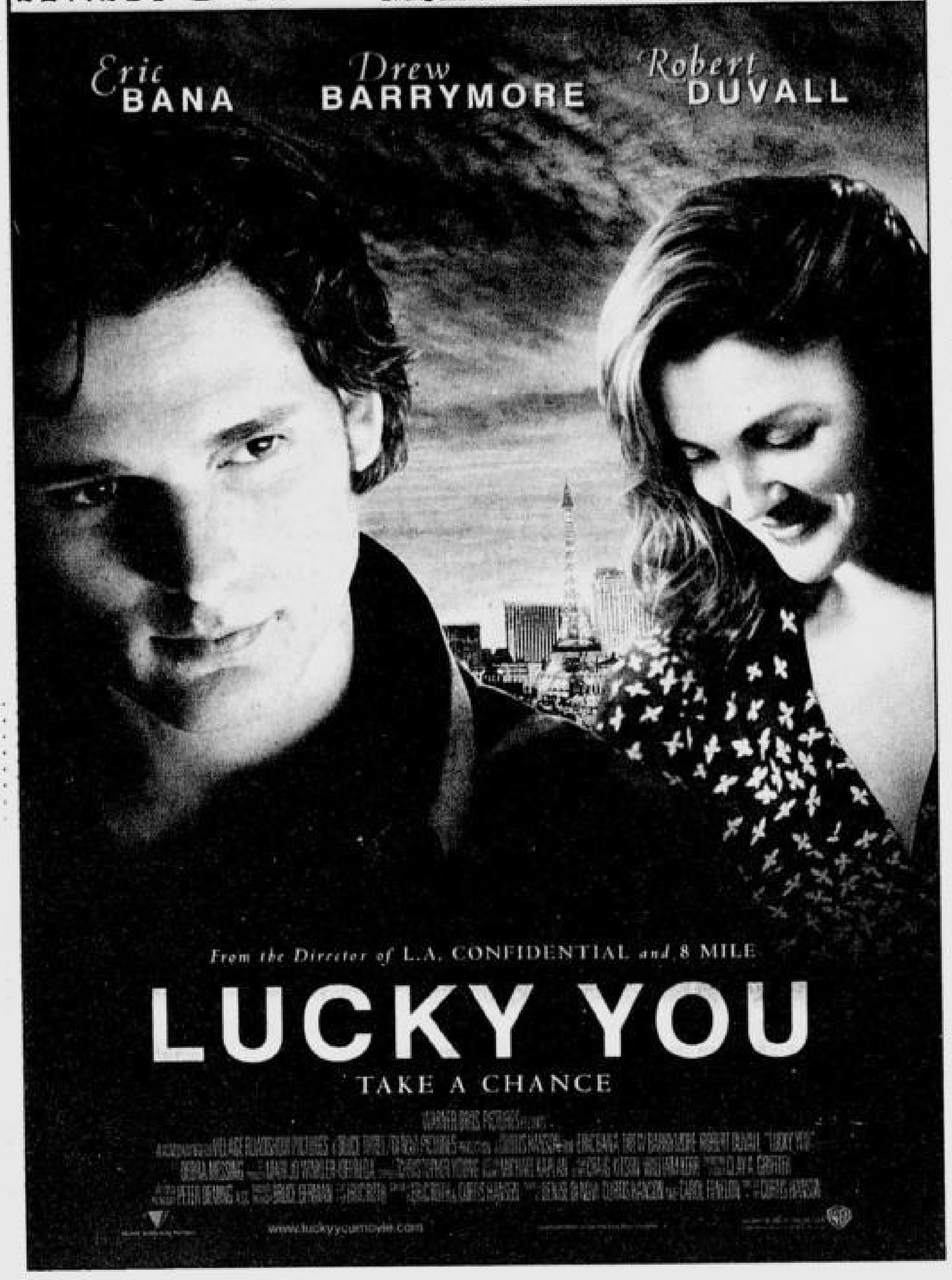
Kirsten, whom we last saw in Sofia Coppola's "Marie Antoinette" and Cameron Crowe's "Elizabethtown," oozed with enthusiasm as she talked of her character, Mary Jane Watson.

Did she have any idea that the web-slinger movie would change her life?

"No I didn't," Kirsten replied. "All I knew is that when I was in Germany, doing another another project at the

KIRSTEN/ E5

GRAND OPENING TODAY!
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children 13 years old and below should be accompanied by a parent or adult. Strong caution for parents due to sensitive subject matter



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